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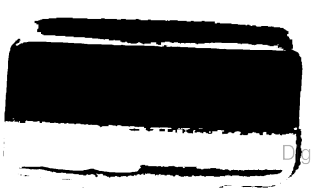

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Merlin,

A MIDDLE-ENGLISH METRICAL VERSION

OF A FRENCH ROMANCE,

BY

HERRY LOVELICH,

SKINNER AND CITIZEN OF LONDON (AB. 1450 A.D.),

EDITED

FROM THE UNIQUE MS. 80 IN CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND GLOSSARIES,

BY

DR. ERNST A. KOCK.

PART I.

LONDON:

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Merlin,

BY LOUELICH THE SKINNER.

(*MS.* 80 *in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.*)

[leaf 88 *c*]

Chap. I.

Now gyneth the devel to wraththen him sore
(as aftir scholen ȝe herkene & here wel more),
whanne that oure lord to helle wente,
and took owt Adam with good entente,
and also Eve, and ek othere mo,
þat with him he likede forto han tho.
and whanne þe develis behelden this,
moche drede and merveille they hadden, j-wis.
So, as Aftyrward longe be-Felle,

[leaf 88 *d*]

to-gederis they conseilled, the develis, ful snelle,
and token hem to-gederis Jn parlement,
the maister-develis, be on assent,
and seiden: "what mester man Js he, this,
that doth vs here al this distres?
we mown not aȝens him maken defens,
whanne he is owht Jn owre presens,
and bynemeth vs that we scholde haue,
and for hym non thing mowen we kepen save.
For we supposede, ful verrayly,
that non man scholde be born of wommans body,
that alle owre they weren be Ryht,
but he hem benemeth vs be his myht.
Sey, how was this ȝoman bore,
be whom owre Ryht js thus forlore?"
thanne answerede anothir devel,
and, as him thowhte, he answerede wel:
"we hauen herd sein be prophecye
that god jn erthe here Scholde dye
Forto saven the Synneris here,
that of Adam and Eve come jn fere.

The devils, angry on account of Christ rescuing Adam and his race from Hell

hold a council.

They wonder who he is,

that thus deprives them of their supposed right.

One of the devils says that the same is the Son of God, who died to save sinners,

30. *and Eve* added above the line.

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and who, in all trials and tribulations,

Anon wenten we thanne hem to prove,
and Evere weren they stedfast jn goddis love,
and the More turment we diden hem do,
Evere the ferthere they weren vs fro,
So that Evere jn here moste peyne
To hem aperede he, jn certeygne,
comforts and helps His faithful ones.
and hem comforted so wondirly wel,
that owre tormentes greved hem neuere a del,
and Euere jn here Moste distresse
he hem deliuerede to Sikirnesse."

The devils agree that,

Thus talkydden they þere al jn fere
of thinges that befallen were—
"That thus from vs hath he taken away
thinges that we not kepen ne May.
wel knowen ȝe alle here wel Everychon
through baptism
that jn water he doth hem waschen anon,
jn þe Name of the Fadir and sone & holi gost,
whiche that ben of Myhtes Most,
and anointment,
and also hem anoynteth with oynement,
where-thorwh owre powere js al j-schent,
So that oure part of hem, Jt is don,
Tyl that owre Servauntes they becom.
He and His ministers
and thus owre power he doth away,
and so don his Mynestres Everyday,
that jn Erthe he hath left here;
they don vs ful often wel mochel dere.
For they, oure Servantes the[y] ben be Ryht,
ȝit ouer hem han they so gret Myht,
that, and they welen oure Servise forsake
and onliche to Jesu thanne hem take,
annihilate their power over mankind.
alle oure powere, than Js it j-don,
and thus we lesen hem Everychon.
Moche goodnesse schewed he for Man-kynde,
Born of a woman,
that jn this world he wold hym bynde
of a wommans body to ben j-bore,
to Saven Mankynde, that was forlore.

32. *they*, *e* corrected from *y*.
47. MS. þ^{t}; similarly l. 97 and often; sometimes also þ^{t}*dir*, so þ^{t}, and the like. 57. MS. *the ben*.
62. MS. *Eoey chon* with the (*e*)*r*-mark twice over *ey*.

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and whanne that he j-boren was,
we hym assaieden jn Every plas,
as moche as was jn owre powere,
and neuere gilty ne fownden we hym jn non Manere,
jn hym of oure werkes neuere Ryht nowht,
For al that Evere we to hym wrowht,
But that he wolde deyen to saven Man,
For jn him hadde we non powere than.
Ful Mochel cherte hadde he to Man,
that so Mochel peyne suffrede for him than,
and hym forto wynnen ageyn,
and from vs hem be-reven, jn certeyn.
Ful Mochel sorwe to vs he wrowhte
thorwgh Mankynde, that he bowhte."
thanne anon Spoken they Jn fere
of Swiche thinges as greved hem there,
of hem that proclamed the tydyng
Ferst jn the Erthe of his comeng:
"and whanne we ony tormentes scholde hem do,
anon he delyverede hem vs Fro.
Therfore wolden we weten ful fayn
The beste to done, Jn certayn,
how that jn the Erthe a child to have
that the peple wolde aftyr crave.
×For he scholde hauen alle connenge
of thyng þat js past and that is comenge,
and Encense the peple to oure lore,
as he dyde that was þere be-fore,
To tellen hem of thinges þat hadde be
and befalle scholden, ful Sikerle.×
So scholde he þe peple to vs drawe,
For of hym they wolden ben Ryht fawe."
thanne seiden they amonges hem Everichon
that swich a child, and they hadden on,
wel Mochel he scholde hem profyte
and torne the peple to here delyte,
For fulwel beleved scholde he be
For his prophecyes, ful Sikerle.

68 and tempted by the devils,

He remained without sin,

72

and died for the love of man.

[leaf 89 *a*]

76

80

The devils further speak of the prophets, who were likewise sustained by Christ.

84

Now the devils would like to have, on earth, a child with the same mental powers,

88

92

96

to draw the people to them.

100

104

94. *fore*, *f* corrected from *b*. 95. MS. þ *ſcholde be*.

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thanne stirte there forth a schrewe anon,
One devil declares he can make women conceive, and seide amonges hem Everichon:
"J haue power Seed forto Sowe
jn the Erthe on wommen bothe hye & lowe,
and j haue on Redy at Myn assent,
that wil Fulfillen Myn talent."
and they form a plan accordingly, So concentyd they that this ilke schrewe
jnto Erthe scholde gon anon that threwe
Forto Fulfillen that jlke dede,
of wheche alle the schrewes token here Rede.
in foolish ignorance of God's wise intentions. Now, grete Foles weren they Everychon,
that amonges hem cowde not knowen on
how that God knew wel alle thyng,
bothe gynneng, Midwardis, and Endyng!
thus departyd they from here conseylle
this werk to be-gynne, with-owten faille.
The devil repairs thanne he that seide that he hadde powere
on women jn Erthe to Engendren there,
he taryed there non lengere thanne,
to a woman, but cam jnto Erthe to this wommanne
whiche womman that dyde hym Servise.
with hire he anon Mette jn prevy Gyse,
and anon he tempted hire so,
who promises to help him. that anon sche concentyd hym to,
and graunted hym, al that sche cowde oper Myhte,
To don him Servyse bothe day & Nyhte.
This woman has a rich husband; and hire lord was a worthy Man,
& moche more good hadde thanne J telle kan.

This Riche Man hadde moche of worldly good,
More thanne ony man tho vndirstood,
of Bestes and of other Richesse,
of kamailles, of jewelis, & of oper worthynesse.
they have three [leaf 89 b] daughters and one son. This worthy Man hadde dowhtren thre,
The Fa[y]rest Wommen that Myhte be,
and a sone, that scholde ben his Eyr,
bothe a gentilmanly child and a fayr;
and alle he hadde be this womman,
that þe devel so mochel part hadde of than.

138. MS. *farest.*

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thanne this devel forȝat non thing,
that Rowhte not of mannes begyleng,
and axede of this womman anon
how that Best he myhte don
hire lord to haue to his partye,
hym forto tellen he preyde hire hye.
sche answerede: "*With* non thing so sone, j-wys,
as only be wraththe, with-owten mys;
For ryht lyhtleche he wile wroth be,
as j the telle now ful sikerle;
and þer-fore wraththe thou myht him sone
with the leste thing that thou wilt done."
thanne wente forth this cursed schrewe anone,
and slowgh his bestes alle thus sone,
a gret partye of hem jn a nyht.
and on the morwen, whanne it was lyht,
the pastour aspide that moreygne,
and to his lord he wente, ful pleyne,
and told hym of that aventure,
how his bestes deiden, J ȝow ensure.
and whanne that the goode lord herde this,
Ful wondirly wroth he was, j-wys,
and axede of the pastour tho
what Skile his bestes deyden so.
the pastour answerede him ageyn:
"Sire, j ne can not weten, jn certein!"
So belefte he stille alle that day.
and whanne the devel this knew & say,
that for so lytel he wolde wroth be,
thanne was he joyful, wel Sekirle,
and thowhte more harm hym to do,
be wraththe þe sonnere to drawen hym to.
So that he * the nexte Nyht
jnto his stable, j Sey ȝow ryht,
and there ten of his hors slowgh he,
the beste that weren jn that contre.

The devil asks her for the best means of insnaring her husband.

She answers: "Make him angry!"

The devil then kills some of his cattle;

and when the herd brings the news in the morning,

the man is wonderfully wroth.

Encouraged by the success,

the devil kills ten of the man's horses;

147. *hir'*, *r'* through correction. 155. MS. *anoñe.*
157. MS. *agret;* similarly l. 212 (*aplawncher*), and frequently.
175. The verb (*wente*?) is missing; cf. ll. 155, 209, and footnote to l. 1719.

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and the man angrily exclaims:

and whanne the goodman wiste of this,
that al his good wente so amys,
anon Ryht angry ful sone he was
for tho tydynges jn that plas,
and a word of anger spak he thore,
wheche after repentyd him ful sore,
and be-took the devel al the Remnaunt,
That him be-lefte, petyt & graunt.

"May the devil take the lot!"

Whanne that the devel herde him so seyn,
thanne was he bothe joyful & fayn,
and thowhte to Greven him moche More
thanne that he dyde ony tyme before.
For he made the goode man thanne so wroth,
that Eche mannes compenye was hym loth.
thanne wiste anon the devel ful wel
that jn him hadde he part a gret del,
and that wel jnowgh he myhte go
jnto what partye him lykede tho.

And so the devil gladly does:

Thanne cam the devel to his sone & his Eyr,
That was bothe so gentyl & Fayr;
[leaf 89 c] Vppon A Nyht, As he in his bed lay,
the devel him strangelede, the sothe to say;
and vppon the Morwen hym fond ded
his owne fadir Jn that same sted.
thanne was he Ryht a sorweful Man,
For that non Recowr ne knew he than,
Sethen that his faire sone he hadde lost so,
thanne jnto disperaunce fyl he tho.
and whanne the devel vndirstod al this,
thanne was he joyful, with-owten Mis.

the son and heir

is found strangled in his bed,

anon thanne wente he to his wyf,
that began al this wo and stryf;
jnto an hygh soler he dyde hire Go,
and abowtes a plawncher a Rope caste tho,
and Sette a thing thanne vndir hire feet,
& þe Rope abowtes hire Nekke teydde askeet;
thanne voided sche anon hire stondyng,
þat so thike cursed womman þere hyre-self heng.
whanne the husbonde beheld al this,

the wife takes her own life in the loft,

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that his wyf thus ded was, j-wys,
and also his sone Jn Swich manere,
thanne was he of wondyr hevy chere,
that there for sorwe he deyde anon,
and thus alle thre, thanne weren they gon.
Lo, thus the devel doth be hem alle
that jn his Servise ony thing don falle.

thanne caste the cursede schrewe a wyle
how þat he myhte his thre dowhtres begyle;
and wel he wyste, Jt myhte not be
but thorwgh som man of his afynyte.
So was there a bacheler Jn the town,
that folwed his werkis bothe vpe and down;
and hym to this place he dyde propyne
these thre faire maidenis forto engyne;
and so ofte thedyr he gan to gon,
that thussone he hadde ouercomen the ton.
and whanne be hire he hadde don folye,
the devel anon it schewede openlye,
and disclawndred it al the contre,
the more schame to hem þat it scholde be.
and jn thyke tyme was tho the lawe,
that ho so dyde ayowtrye, scholde be slawe
and with stones j-browht to the ded,
For that was the lawe Jn that sted;
and thus with Stoneng scholden they ben schent,
but ȝif sche were comwne to alle mennes entent.

and the bereft man himself dies with grief.

Now the three daughters remain.

One of them is seduced by a young man from the town,

her disgrace is divulged,

and according to the law she must die.

Thanne thus this wommman was taken anon,
and the man fledde and was agon;
and anon was browht to-forn the justice
there forto Resceyven hire jewyse.
so that of hire they hadden pyte,
Swich maner of jewyse be hire to se,
For that hire fadyr was so worthy a man,
and Jn so schort tyme was mischevyd than.
but Natheles nedis ded moste sche be,
and thanne thus acordid they, Sykerle,

The judges, out of pity, decide to let the execution take place in the night.

252. *Jn*, *J* corrected from *s*; *so* added above the line.

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So that for love of hire kynrede
be Nyhtes tyme hire stone to dede.

A holy hermit, on hearing of all this, visits the grieving sisters,

thanne jn that contre was there a good man,
that of alle these merveilles herde than,
and to the tweyne sostren gan he gon
hem forto counseillen with anon.
and there anon he spak hem tylle,
and axede how this misaventure befille—
[leaf 89 d]
" Of 3owre fadyr And modyr Jn Fere,
of 3owre brothir and 3oure Soster dere?"
" We nete Neuere, Sire, Jn certeyn,

The girls say that God seems to hate them.

but 3if that god vs hate, ful pleyn,
and this torment Suffreth vs to haue;
we knowen non othyr, so god vs saue!"

The hermit rebukes them,

thanne seide this goodman to hem tho:
" Forsothe, 3e seyn mys bothe two,
For god hatede nevere creature,
but Js misplesid, J 3ow enswre,
whanne ony Synnere doth him hate
Owthir for ony thing with him debate.
For weteth ful wel, as j 3ow telle,

casts the blame on the devil,

that is the werk of the devel of helle;
and that 3oure soster thus Js ded,
Syker it is be the develys red."
" Sire, so god now be owre helpyng,
we knewen neuere of this thyng."

and exhorts them to a good life.

" thanne kepe 3e 3ow from jlle werkyng,
and caste 3ow to plese now hevene kyng;
for jlle werk bryngeth a man to evele ende
and jn-to synne & synneres schende;
and he that hym wol not kepen from jlle werkyng,
to ille ende it bringeth hym at his deyeng."
thanne thus prechid hem this good man,
how that they scholden bo̧e plesen an serven god than.

The elder sister likes his lore.

So that the eldest Soster of hem bothe
his teching liked wel, forsothe,
and seide that sche wolde potten al hire peyne
hys doctryne to kepen, Jn certeyne.

286. *deyeng*, the first *e* corrected from *y*.

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thanne seide this goodman to hem tho:
"3if that 3e welen thus aftyr me do,
3e scholen ben bothe my loves dere
and my dowhtren jn God, bothe jn fere.
and 3if 3e hauen Nede of ony thyng
owþer of ony maner of cownseyllyng,
Swich helpe and cownseil as j kan do,
J schal it for 3ow don Evere Mo.
and therfore abasche 3ow Ryht nowht,
but stedfastly beleveth jn hym that 3ow bowht;
and that 3e comen often-tymes to Me,
for fer from 3ow j ne schal not be."
thus hem cow[n]ceillede this holy Man,
and forth his weye anon wente he than.
whanne that the devel wiste of this,
Moche sorwe he made, with-owten Mys,
and wiste wel þat Engyned myhten they not be
but be som wonman, ful Sykerle.
So was there on, as j vndirstonde,
that jn his Servise hadde dwellid longe;
and anon it putte jn hire herte,
that to thike Maidenis 3he scholde gon ful smerte.
and so sche dide anon, this wikked womman,
wente forto cownseillen with hem than,
and took the 3ongest Soster on Syde,
and anon with hire counseilled that tyde,
hire axeng anon how 3he did fare,
and what Maner thing hire soster dyde thare.
"Loueth sche not 3ow wondirly wel?"
"3is, and Ellis were it azens Resown & Skyl;
but that sche is other while hevy
For this Mysaventure, trewely,
The wheche jn Schort tyme to vs is befalle
of oure fadyr & Modir and Frendis alle,
So that with hire is non Manere of chere,
Nethir to Me ne to non oþer ellis where,
but doth al aftyr a goodmannes techyng,

The hermit says he will be a father to them,

ever ready to help and advise.

The devil, annoyed at this,

sends a bad woman

to make the younger girl

dissatisfied with her sister

305. MS. *cowceillede*; cf. the footnote to l. 853.
314. *3he* corrected from *they*. 319. *3he*, *h* corrected from *e*.
320. *hir'*, *r'* through correction; *so/ter* added above the line.

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That here faste be-sydes is his dwellyng,
[leaf 90 a] So that nothyng sche Wyle do,
but ȝif he only consente to." 332
"A," quod this olde Bawde tho,
and with their present mode of life. "thou knowest of Mochel sorwe & wo,
and neuere of joye schalt þou knowe, trewlye,
as longe as thou art jn hire compenye. 336
A, my leve dowghter so dere,
She extols the indulgence of lust, ȝif that thou knewe what Mannes compenye were,
thou wost neuere Resten ne dwelle,
Tyl Mannes Feleschepe ȝe comen vntylle. 340
more desirable than anything else, For better at Ese Seker ben we,
Jn Mannes compenye whanne that we be,
althowgh we haue but on almesse of Bred,
thanne ȝe with al ȝoure good jn ȝoure sted. 344
Fy of joye of ony wommman,
but ȝif sche haue joye oþer compenye of Man!
My Fayre dowhter, to ȝow this j seye,
for that ȝe knowen not Mannes compenye. 348
and points out the girl's disadvantageous position, as a younger sister, with regard to inheritance and matrimony. and wete ȝe why J thus to ȝow Seye?
ȝowre Soster is Eldere than ȝe, trewlye,
and taketh this here as hire owne good,
and the lasse setteth be ȝow, be the Rood, 352
So that the joye of ȝoure fayre Body
Js ful clene j-lost, j sey ȝow trewely."
The girl is interested, but frightened of her sister's fate. thanne seide this damysele to hire tho:
"how scholde j this thing thus do 356
that ȝe to me speken offe pleynly,
whanne that my Soster was ded therby?"
"jn the name of God," quod this Bawde thanne,
The woman says there is a means of avoiding it. "ȝowre Sostyr wrowhte as a folisch wommanne! 360
but ȝif ȝe wile werken aftyr Me
and to my conseille trosten, sekerle,
ȝe scholde neuere comen to-fore justice,
and ȝit haue ȝoure delytes Jn alle wyse." 364
The girl, for fear of her sister, "A," quod this damysele, "how scholde j do?
that j ne myhte ȝow speken more vnto!
For j ne dar not for my soster here

366. After *speken* another *ȝow* was added above the line, but erased again.

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Nethir to 3ow Speke ne Make non chere.
Goth 3e now hens, tyl that Eftt sone
that we Mown Speke to-gederys alone!"
whanne that the devel herde hire so seyn,
Thanne was the schrewe jn joye, ful pleyn,
and wiste wel be hire answeryng
that sche scholde hoppen vppon hys Rynge.
whanne this womman from thens was past,
this damysele bethowghte hire atte last
often-tymes of hire wordis, pleyn,
that prevyly betwenes hem gonne they seyn.
and whanne the devel vndirstod openly
that to-gyderis scholden they speken prevyly,
thanne sette he this Maydenis herte on fyre
aftyr this womman more to desire;
that so ferforth, as j 3ow seye,
atte laste sche beheld hire fayre Bodye,
and to hire-Self thus gan sche talke,
alone as sche jn hire chambre gan walke:
"Ful trewly me this good womman tolde
that this Faire Body lost ben Scholde!"

368 bids the woman to leave for the time.

372 The devil, however, is now sure of success.

376 The girl muses on the woman's words,

380

384 and finishes by thinking that she is right.

388

Thanne aftyr hire sche sente vppon a day,
and thus to hire anon gan sche say:
"Certes, ful trowe now j it fynde,
that my soster to me Js vnkynde."
"that knew j, damysele, tho ful wel,
lyk as j 3ow tolde Everydel,
and lasse be 3ow wile sche sette,
For sche fareth Every Day bette and bette.
for sche lyveth as sche liketh Best,
whiche is to 3ow nethir Ese ne Rest,
and 3e ben ordeygned for Mannes kende,
and therto ben 3e bothe good and hende."
thanne seide this damysele anon agayn:
"that joye wolde j hauen fulfayn;
3if that j wiste not To ben ded,
J scholde concenten to 3oure red."

392 She then sends for the woman,

who renews her provoking

396 [leaf 90 b]

and tempting speeches.

400

The girl asks again

404

403. *To*, *T* through correction.

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"J sey 3ow, damysele, *with*-owten dwere,
and 3e don as dyde 3oure soster dere,
ded moste 3e thanne Nedlynges be,
but and 3e welen werken aftyr me."

for that means of safe indulgence of lust. "leve dame, thanne how Scholde J do
my lust to haue, and they not me Slo?"
thanne this Bawde answerid hire agayn:

At length she is told: "J schal 3ow tellen, Jn certayn:
3e scholen 3ow maken as 3e weren wroth,
and that 3owre sostres compenye is 3ow loth,

"Be a prostitute!" and *þer*fore graunteth to alle men buxom to be
and to leden 3oure lyf jn lechere;
thanne hath there powere non justyse
3ow forto putten to non jewyse,
and thus al 3oure lust scholen 3e haue
and from alle peryles to ben Save.
3it thanne myhte there comen som good man,
that for 3oure erytage wolde wedden [3ow] than."

She follows the advice, stealing away from home. Thanne thus behyhte 3e hire forto don,
and from hire Soster sche stal anon,
and bond hire a comown womman to be,
be cownseil of that womman, Sikerle.

Ful mochel joye made the devel thanne,
whanne he hadde thus geten this wommanne.

The elder sister then goes to the hermit, and whanne tho eldest Sostyr knew of this,
that thus hire Soster hadde don amys,
anon wente sche to this good man tho,
that to-fore tymes here creaunce tawhte hem so,

sorrowing and weeping, with sory herte and weping chere.
Anon this goodman axede what hire were,
and of hire hadde ful gret pyte,
& to hire thanne anon Seyde he:
"blesse the jn the Name of the Trenite,
and telle me now what eylleth the."

and tells of her fresh misery. "ha, Sire," sche Seide, "J am ful wo!
my soster from me js now a-go,

422. MS. *weddē than*; cf. l. 522.
436. *Thanne*, *T* through correction.

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and is becomen a comown wo*m*man.
ful wo for hire am j now than!"
whanne that this goodman herde of this, — The hermit, grieved and
Ful sory he was and wroth, j-wys, — indignant,
and seide: "The devel nyl not belynne,
tyl that he haue 3ow alle jn his gy*n*ne,
but 3if that god now be thy wardeyn,
J seye 3ow, damysele, jn certeyn."
"Now, leve Sire, how scholde j do
That Fals thef to kepen me fro?"
thanne seide to hire this good *Man* anon: — gives her advice how
"J schal 3ow telle how 3e schole don. — now to protect
3if that thou wylt don aftyr me, — herself, at least, from
he ne schal neu*e*re deceyven the." — the devil:
"Now certes," quod this damysele a-geyn,
"aftyr 3ow wyl j don, Jn certeyn,
what so *E*vere 3e bydde me do,
whethir it torne me to wele o*per* wo."
"belevest þou not on fadyr & sone & holigost, — she must have the
thre p*er*sones and on god of myhtes most, — right faith,
and that crist amongₑs vs cam here
For *Man*nes sowle, that he bowhte so dere,
and alle synneris to saven also
That his comawndeme*n*t Wolden do, — [leaf 90 c]
and beleven as holy chirche,
and as good cristen folk to wirche?" — and act as a good Christian;
thanne answerid this damysele ageyn:
"J wil beleven as 3e wyle seyn;
and as wisly as on god j be-leve,
so from alle tormentis he mot me *M*eve!"
"thanne *M*ore over J charge the — she must beware of
that jn no*n* wyse wroth that thou be; — anger,
For that is on of the *M*oste thing
wherthorwgh the devel doth his werkyng.
and loke thow love god over alle thyng — and, in true love of God
and thy Neyghbour wi*th*-owten grochcheng. — and neighbours,
& so be that *G*overnau*n*ce
þou myht the kepe from alle *M*ischawnse.

451. Erasures after *hire* and *good*; the *M* came out of the muddle apparently with four downstrokes.

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keep herself free from all guilt;

and loke that cowpable nevere thou be
a3ens thy god Jn non Manere degre,
but that thou plese hym vtterly
and alle the seintes of hevene gen*e*rally,
That loven god and his Servise;
loke thow hem love jn alle wyse.

she must bless herself in rising and before going to bed,

and loke, Eche tyme that thou dost Ryse,
that thou þe blesse be ony wyse,
and also that thow blesse the Every Nyht,
Er that thou jn thy Bed lye down Ryht,
jn the Name of the Fadyr and sone and þe holygost,
which that is on God and of Myhtes Most.

making the sign of the cross,

and with that loke thou make a Cros on the,
Jn Memorye that he deyde vppon the tre
vs for to beyen from the peynes of helle.
loke thou do thus as j the telle!
and of that Enemy haue thow neu*e*re no*n* drede,
where Eu*e*re thow be Jn ony stede;

and have a light burning in the night.

and where so Evere thow lye on Nyht,
Loke be ony weyes that thou have lyht,
For there as lyht is, he ne wyl not be,
For lyht hateth he most, ful Sekerle!"

Thus this holy Man tawhte this Mayde,
that gret drede hadde, as j have 3ow sayde,
lest that the devel hire Scholde be-gyle.

The girl goes home, and follows the hermit's instructions.

thus wente sche hom with-jnne a whille
Jn ful beleve ful stedfastly
and to hire Neyghbours ful Mek and lowly;
also Evere hire god hadde sche jn Mynde,
that so to god and to þe peple was sche good & kende.

She is reminded, by her neighbours, of her family troubles,

the goode Men and the goode Wyves of that contre
often to that Mayden come*n*, ful Sekerle,
and thus to hire thanne go*n*nen they saye:
"Jt Nis non wondyr thowgh 3e han Fraye
of the torment that is 3ow befalle
of 3oure Fadyr & Modyr and frendis alle,
whiche that 3owre brothir and Sostren were.

486. *þe* squeezed in afterwards. 488. *E* through correction.
495. *of* added above the line. 505. MS. *fulbeleve*.

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here Misaventure, it is to ȝow gret dere,
but that ȝe take now som good cownsaille;
For ful Riche ȝe ben and of ful gret availle,
and worthy ȝe ben of Erytage,
that Som Man that is of hygh parage,
that fulfayn he wolde be
ȝow wedden to wyve, ful Sykerle."
thanne seide this Maiden to hem anon Ryht:
"Me Governe and kepe God, þat is Most of Myht,
and jn his Servise me Governe & kepe
at alle tymes, whethir j wake oþer slepe!"
and thus tweyne ȝer lyvede sche fully,
That of hire power neuere hadde the fals Enemy,
Ne he Myhte nevere Jn non Degre
hire Fynden Jn non adversite.
And whanne he Sawhe that he ne Myhte
that Mayden Engynen be day ne Nyhte,
Nether Maken hire to forȝeten jn non degre
that the goodman tawht hire, ful Sykerle
(For wroth wolde sche ben jn non Manere
Ne lyhtles, where so that Evere sche were),
thanne to hire Soster he wente anon,
and to this goode Mayden dyde hire to gon
vppon a satirday, whanne it was Eve
(tyl sche was forthe, he Nolde not leve),
hire Soster Jn anger Forto brynge,
þat he on hire myhte werken his Engynenge.
So that hire Soster thider went
& with hire Many knaves, verament.
thanne seide this Maiden jn this Manere:
"A, leeve Soster, what do ȝe here,
ȝe forto comen jn Swich degre,
and with ȝow to bryngen swich compeyne?
Jt schal me Maken blame to have,
and þat Nedeth me not, so god me saue!"

and of her own position

In prayers to God,

she keeps off the devil for two years.

[leaf 90 *d*]

But then the devil, thus balked,

contrives to send her fallen sister to her, of a Saturday night,

with a lot of rowdy followers.

517. *cownſaille*, *a* corrected from *e*; cf. the footnotes to ll. 2051, 3531, 5707, 5855, etc.
522–524. *wedden*, *ſeide*, *Goverñ* partly blotted.
528. *neuere* added above the line.
530. *adverſite*, *d* corrected from *v*. 547. *ȝe* on erasure.
548. *ȝow* added above the line.

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She is accused, by her, of forbidden intercourse with the hermit,

thanne spak this cursed damysele ageyn:
"thow lyvest moche wers than j, jn certeyn!"
and bar hire good soster on hande vppon
that jn folye sche lovede that holy man.
"and ȝif that the peple it wiste, Sekerlye,
anon wolden they the distroye!"
and whanne this maide herde hire so seyn,

flies into a rage, has a tussle with the disturbers,

be bothe scholdres sche took hire, ful pleyn,
and wolde han put hire owt at the ȝate,
but that hire knaues wolde hire not late,
but setten hand on this good maiden anon,
and hire to-beten bothe bak an bon,
Tyl atte laste sche brak hem fro,

rushes into her chamber, locks her door,

& jnto hire chambre sche gan to go,
and schitte the dore faste hire vppon,
and so there-jnne dwelde al alon.
& non more peple with hire gan dwelle
but a man and a maide, as j ȝow telle,
and for hem nolden they not Spare,
but diden this goode womman moche care.
this maiden alone jn hire chambre was,
and ful mochel mone made jn that plas,
and wept and sorwede mochel of the nyht,

flings herself on the bed,

so that jn hire clothes sche leide hire down ryht.
Anon as this enemy this gan aspye,
that sche was so angry vttirlye,
thanne made he bothe joye and game,
whiche torned this maiden to mochel blame.
Thanne of gret deol this maide hire thowhte,

and forgets, in her emotion and grief,

So that of hire-self but litel sche rowhte.
sche hire remembrid of Fadyr and Modyr bothe,
and of hire brother and Sostren, forsothe,
and of that grete aventure,
So was sche Sorweful, J ȝow ensure.
and thus jn morneng and wrathe sche fyl jn slepe,

all about blessing and light.

and al the goodmannes lore sche forȝete:
bothe of hire blessyng and ek of lyht
sche clene forȝat that jlke nyht.

564. MS. *his* for *hir*; cf. the footnotes to ll. 147, 320, 948, 4648.
582, 586. *of*, *lore* added above the line.

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thanne was the devel ful of joye, — The devil,
and thowhte fulsone hire to anoye.
"now," quod the devel, "tyme it is, — seizing the opportunity,
For sche hath forȝeten hire lore, j-wys,
Bothe mynde of God and of Hire Maister Also, — [leaf 91 *a*]
therfore it is hygh tyme that j now go.
Now myhten we wel don owre dever,
Owre man to putten *with*-jnnen hire her."
Anon this devel that hadde Swich myht
with wom̃e[n] To compenyen bothe day & Nyht,
To this goode Maiden wente he anon, — defiles her in her sleep.
and redy hym made that dede to don,
and on hire he engendred, as j ȝow telle,
a *Mer*veillous child ful schortly and snelle.
Anon as that Maiden conceyved was,
the devel hym wente owt of that plas;
and that mayden tho awook anon, — On awakening, immediately after,
whanne that the devel hadde thus j-don.
and evene Jn hire awakyng
this goodman hadde sche Jn remembryng,
and took vp hire hond and gan hire to blesse,
& seide: "o seinte Marye, what is thisse? — she discovers her disgrace,
and what *Maner* of thing Js me betyd,
Sethen that j leide me vppon my bed?
me thenkyth, apeyred welsore am J,
Sethen j me here leyde, ful trewly.
wherfore, blessid lady, j preye to the, — prays to the Virgin,
So that to thy sone thow preye for me,
that on me he wolde haven pyte
and from the fals enemy defenden me."
thanne, whanne sche hadde don this dede,
vpe sche ros owt of that stede, — and gets up to look for the perpetrator.
and wende han fownden that Jche wyht
that hire so hadde deceyved thike Nyht.
So that to hire chamberdore sche wente anon, — Finding the door still locked,
and it fond fast schet & not vndon,
lyk as sche hadde schet yt to-fore,
and non wyht ne fond sche thore.

598. MS. *wōme*.

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and the room empty,

thanne furthere to serche cam jn hire thowht,
but al that avayllede thanne hire ryht nowht.

she understands that it must have been the devil.

thanne cam jt jn hire mynde anon
that the enemy hire hadde ouergon.
thanne ful mochel sorwe gan sche make,
whanne that verraylly sche gan wake.
sche besowhte God with humble chere
that jn this world neuere schamed sche were.

At daybreak, when the intruders have left,

and whanne it was the lyht of day,
the devel hire Soster thanne ladde away,
For sche hadde wel j-sped hire arende,
wherfore thedyr he gan hire sende.
and whanne that hire Sostir thens was gon,

she unlocks her door, sends for two women,

owt of hire chambre sche cam anon,
and cleped hire Servaunt ful hastelye,
and bad hym faste to hire hye.
thanne thus to hym tho gan sche telle:
"Go jnto towne, and not ne dwelle,
and bidde swiche two wommen to me hye,
& that they to me comen hastelye!"
Anon as they comen bothe jn fere,
thanne hem cowde sche maken non chere,

and goes with them to the hermit,

but evene with hem took the ryhte weye
To hire confessour, alle thre, jn feye.
and whanne hire confessour hire gan beholde,

who is surprised at the sight of her.

Jn his herte he merveillede many folde,
and to that wommman thanne gan he to say:
"hyderward the aryveth som gret affray."
thanne seide this wommman to hym aze:
"Sire, j trowe that it may ful wel be,
[leaf 91 b] For me Js be-falle A destyne
That neuere fyl to wommman but to me,
and am J here comen to zow
Som good cownseille to taken of zow.

After reminding him of his promises of forgiveness

For toforn tymes han ze me told,
thowgh a body Jn synne were neuer so bold,
and he be schreven, and repente also,

643. *tho* over struck-out *thanne*.
650. *thre*, *r* corrected from *e*.

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and don the penaunce that longeth þerto,
his Synnes forȝoven to hym scholen be;
Thus tolde ȝe me, Sire, ful Sykerle.
Sire, J haue Synned and that ryht sore,
as j haue told ȝow ferst before,
For the enemy hath deceyved me,
as J schal ȝow tellen, ful seker[l]e.
Jt happed, my Soster cam me vnto,
and me wrowhte bothe care & wo,
and how that sche wraththed me ful jlle,
tyl that to my chambre j wente vntylle
al ful wroth and of hevy chere,
and faste my dore J schette there.
and for the grete wraththe that j am jnne,
me forto blessen J gan to blynne,
and forȝat what J scholde do,
which aftyr torned me to mochel wo.
and whanne that J of my Sleepe awook,
and remembraunce to me took,
thanne fond J that defowlyd J was,
and my maydenhot aweye Jn that plas.
thanne serched j my chambre al abowte,
and non wyht ne fond, with-owten dowte,
ne wiste ho it hadde me do,
From that owr ȝit hider-to.
And, Sire, al thus engyned am J,
wherfore to God and ȝow J crye mercy,
that thowgh my body J-tormentyd be,
ȝit that my sowle be not lost Jn non degre."
thanne herkened this good man everydel
al that to hym sche seyde, ful wel,
but he beleved it non thyng,
For, Sekyr, he held it for a lesing,
For he ne herde nevere to-fore
of swich a thing speken, sethen he was bore.
thanne answerid hire this good man agayn:
"Ful of the devel thou art, ful pleyn,
and the devel js fer with-Jnne the.

664 for those who repent and do penance,
668 she acknowledges that she has sinned
672 by being angry
676 and forgetful,
680 which has led to her being disgraced
684 by an unknown creature.
688
692 The hermit, incredulous,
696
700 rebukes her,

670. MS. *fekere.*

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and says that confession and penance are not for liars.

how scholdest thou thanne confessed be
ǫther ony penaunce of me take,
whanne swiche lesinges þou dost me make?
owther how scholde j ȝeven the ony penaunce,
whanne j knowe wel thou makest variawnce?
For jn that degre was neuere womman jnto this day
From hire hire maydenhot taken away,
but ȝif sche knew, Felte, other Sye,
ho that it hadde don, Sekerlye.
and thow makest me to beleve
Swich a thing as thow myht not preve."

But the girl protests she has told the truth.

Thanne answerid this womman ageyn
and seide: "So god haue part on me, pleyn,
and also kepe my body from torment,
as trowthe j haue Seid ȝow, verament."

The hermit then lets her atone for her disobedience

thanne answerid this good man to hire tho:
"And it be lyk as thou seyst me vnto,
thow schalt wel knowen, and j Jn fere,
er that come fulliche the ende of þe ȝere.
But thou hast broken thin obedyence,
and ayens me don ful gret defense,
[leaf 91 *c*] And broken my comaundement
that J comanded the, verament;
Wherfore penaunce thou schalt haue
Jn amendement thy Sowle to Save:

by fasting,

Every fryday thow most Faste
and to the taken but on repaste.

for her incredible commerce

& Jn manere that thou luxvre hast do,
which that myn herte Nyl not concenten therto,
how scholde [j] þanne ony penaunce leyn on the,
but that j knew the certeynte?
For it were to lytel, al dayes of thy lyve
ȝif that algates J scholde the Schryve."
thanne seide this woman to hym ageyn:

(fully resigned as she is)

"what evere ȝe me chargen, Jn certeyn,
J schal it don with ful good wylle,
what so evere to me ȝe putten vntylle."
thanne seide this goodman to hire ageyn:

731. MS. *ſcholde þānne.*

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"To goddis *mer*cy thou takest the, pleyn,
and axest cownseyl of holy chirche,
only goddis comaun*dement* forto wirche,
and hym to worschepen with al thy Myht
that a3ens the devel for the gan fyht,
and bowht the with his *pre*cious blood,
and for the deyde vppon the Rood.
thow seist that thou art ful of Repentaun*ce*
and forsakest alle Lecherie, *with*-owten variaun*ce*,
and that thou neue*re* dedist amys,
but as jn thy sleepe behapped the this
wherfrom non wyht May hem defende,
but that 3if god the bettere *grace* hem sende?"
and vppon this, chast sche gan hire swere,
and to him seide, 3if it so were,
To-Forn God hire borwgh to be,
that sche be not dampned jn no*n* degre—
"For this Synne that j haue do,
owt of this world wha*n*ne j go fro."

by perfect devotion to God and His Holy Church.

He questions her once more,

and she swears to her innocence.

Thus hire penaun*ce* Resceyved sche thanne,
that vppon hire leyde this good Manne,
and Resceyved it ful humblely,
as sche that for hire Sy*n*nes was sory.
tho this goodman hire blessed anon,
and forward with hire he gan to gon.
"and algates in the love of jesu crist
loke thou Evere more that thou tryst!"
So that he ladde hire forth be the hond
To the haly water stope, J vndirstond,
and dide hire drynken *per*-offen, *þat* he myhte se,
a gret drawht jn the Name of the Trenite,
and holy water caste vppon hire there,
and bad hire not for3eten jn non Manere—
"al that j have now comanded the,
loke thou it do, where so thou be.
and wha*n*ne thou hast ony Nede of Me,
here schalt thou me fynden, ful Sykerle!"

The hermit then blesses her,

takes her to the Holy Water,

repeats his command-ments,

744. MS. *forthe*; thus often.
746. *deyde*, the first *e* through correction.

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and ȝit he enjoyned hire more over tho
alle þe good dedis that sche scholde do,
and sends her home. and thus he be-tawht hire to God almyht,
and hom aȝen sche wente anon ryht.
The devil rages. thanne, whanne the devel aspide al this,
and that his pray he scholde thus mis,
thanne was the cursede schrewe wondir wroth,
that he to hire was thanne so loth.
After two months, So dwelled sche there two monthes oþer thre,
and ful holy lif ladde, ful Sekerle,
her condition is noticed. Tyl that sche gan to barnysche ryht faste,
[leaf 91 d] And Was Aspied Atte laste,
Before friends and relations, where-offen hire Frendes angred ful sore,
and so dyde sche ȝit wel more,
she protests her innocence & seyde: "so god haue *mercy* on me,
J ne kan not weten how it scholde be."
thanne seiden hire Frendis to hire tho:
"why, han there so many men knowen ȝow so,
that ȝe ne weten hos Jt is?
now mafey, thanne this goth amys!"
time after time, "thanne preye j god that j neuere deliuered be,
ȝif j knew evere of manes compeyne,
othyr evere wyste of this aventure,
how to me jt is comen, j ȝow ensure."
but they disbelieve her, thanne hire Frendis blessid hem echon,
and to hire they seyden anon:
"this thyng ne myhte nevere be
be ȝow ne be non womman, Sikirle.
but on him, j trowe, ȝe troste,
that he ȝow excusen moste;
But, Jn Sekyr, Jt wele not be,
werfore vs sore Repentyth, Sekyrle;
and point out her sure fate. For also sone as the jvge it wot,
anon, with-owten Faille, deyen ȝe mot."

Thanne, whanne this woman herde this,
Ful sore dismayed Jt was, J-wys,
and seyde: "So god of my Sowle haue *mercy*,

778. MS. *that ſche hadde don & ſcholde do.*

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J neuere ne knew ne sawh that Mannes body — When she perseveres,
that me hath don this jlke dede,
as jn alle my werkis so god me spede!"
thanne wenten hire frendis from hire anon,
and for a fool these wommen helden hire Echon. — they consider her a fool.
"Now certes, fowle loste is 3oure bewte,
that thus han jt lost jn Swiche degre!"
whanne that sche herde these wommen thus speke, — The afflicted woman repairs to the hermit,
anon to hire confessour gan sche to Reke,
and tolde hym of this wommans answere,
as that to hire sche hadde Seyde Ere.
anon as this good Man Sawh that sche
Qwyk with childe was, certeinle,
and Mochel he Merveilled of this chaunce,
& anon axede hire of that penaunce— — who asks about her penance,
"that to-forn tyme the joyned j for this,
hast thow it don?" "3e, leve Sire, j-wis,
that haue j don, Syre, with-owten faille!"
"but cam he Evere sethen, the owht to asaille, — and whether the devil has annoyed her again.
owthir trespacedest þou Euere ony More,
but only that thou hast told me be-fore,
Ne neuere but onys jt cam to the?"
"No, so me good helpe, Sire, Sikerle!"

Whanne that the goodman herde hire thus telle
Of this aventure, how it befelle,
anon a book he took to hym tho, — The hermit takes a book,
and þis Mater jn Scripture he let thrynne do. — and writes down all these things.
"Now be 3e Sewr what j schal say:
anon as this child is born, jn fay, — The truth, he says, shall be known at the birth of the child,
of on thing j schal knowe, certeyn:
3if þat ony tale 3e han tolde me jn veyn.
and 3if to me 3e han Mad a lesyng,
Ful Siker 3e ben of 3oure hyndryng; — and accordingly she shall perish
and 3if to me the sothe han 3e told,
Jt schal 3ow helpen Many fold,
For thanne ful Syker Mown 3e ben
that 3e scholen nethir deth felen ne sen. — or be saved.
but 3it gret drede 3e mown hauen a throwe,
For anon as the justice doth it knowe,

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[leaf 92 a] Anon they Welen to-gederys conseylle,
For the impending trial and 3ow for-juggen for here avaylle,
and seyn that ded scholen 3e be,
For that 3e han trespaced Jn avowtre.
but that anon as they han 3ow take,
doth me to wetene for 3owre owne sake,
he promises her his help, and j schal comen to 3ow jn Socowrenge,
and god schal ben thanne 3oure helpinge;
For, Seker, 3e mown ben þerto bold,
and it be as 3e han me told."
thanne seyde this good man to hire tho:
and sends her home again. "Azen to 3oure hows hom that 3e go,
and loke, good lif that 3e lede,
For to a good ende jt wyle 3ow spede."
and thus wente sche hom ageyn,
as j 3ow sey nowe, Jn certeyn,
and ful benyngnely lyvede there,
When the judges are informed, Tyl that it cam the justice to the ere.
thanne comen [they] jnto the Same town
onliche for this Wommannes enchesown,
and þere sche was taken and to-forn hem browht,
to weten 3if sche cowde excusen hire owht.
and imprison her, Whanne sche was taken and jn preson don,
sche sent aftyr this good man anon,
and he thedyr cam jn ful gret hye,
as faste as [he] myht gon, Sekerlye;
and thider cam he Neuere so sone,
that to-foren the justice sche was browht anone.
the hermit speaks with them, The justices clepeden this good man,
and tolden hym how that sche seide than,
For sche hem tolde, ful certeynly,
that sche knew nevere of mannes compeny.
"Trowe 3e," quod the justice thanne,
"that this myhte ben with-owten feleschepe of manne?"
thanne seide to hem this goodman ageyn:
"j sey not that j thenke now, jn certeyn,

853. The last word was miswritten, blotted out, and written once more. 866. MS. *forto*.
871. *thãne* corrected from *and*; the pronoun omitted.
878. MS. *as myht*.

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but and ȝe welen don aftyr ME,
at this tyme juged schal sche not be,
Neþer not as longe as gret sche Js,
ȝif that ȝe wele don be MYN avys.
For it were Neyther Skele ne Resown
To putten that child to ony distrocciown,
that neuere jn non wyse deservyd the ded,
ȝif owghtes that ȝe welen don be my Red."
" Syre, we scholen don as we ȝow say:
aftyr ȝow we scholen werken this day."
" ȝif that ȝe welen werken aftyr ME,"
quod this goodman thanne, " Sykirle,
jnto a strong warde scholen ȝe hire putte,
and strong lokes vppon hire Schette,
and putte hire jnto a strong towr,
and *with* hire tweyne *wo*mmen for hire hono*ur*,
hire forto helpen at hire deliueraunce
and hire to socowren jn that chawnce;
and that owt from hire mown they not gon,
No more thanne sche may from hem don;
and that they there to-gederis be,
tyl that child be born ful vtterle,
and tyl that it may it somwhat Susteyne;
this js my REED, j sey ȝow certaygne.
thanne scholen ȝe knowen and sen MORE thing
thanne ȝe owht knowen at this begynneng,
and forjuggen MOWN ȝe thanne this wommanne
as lyk that ȝe fynden RESOWN thanne.
This js MY conseille, and ȝe welen it do,
And ȝif not ȝe Wylen, J parte ȝow fro."
thus wrowhten they thanne al jn fere
aftyr that goodmannes cownseyl there,
and putten hire jn-to [a] strong towr,
& *with* hire tweyne wommen for hire hono*ur*,
Swich as to MESTER scholde be
That longeth to wommans parturite,
and a Fenestre open be ENCHOSOWN
here vyaundes to taken bothe vpe & down,

and advises them to put off her trial,
for the innocent child's sake,
letting her stay in a strong tower,
with two women to attend her,
till the child shall be born and be strong enough.
[leaf 92 b]
The judges follow his advice.

899. *ȝe* added above the line. 921. MS. *jn to ſtrong.*

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and what Necessaryes hem belonged also,
vpe at that wyndowe to hem taken tho.
and whanne that thus be this goodmannes conseille
jn the towr they weren browht, Sawns faille,
The hermit recommends immediate baptism, thanne spak this good man to hem jn hy,
and to this damysele he seide, trewly:
"Loke that anon as thou delyveryd be,
that faste jt be crystened & smartle;
and a message to be sent to him before the trial. and to-fore the justice whanne þou schalt go,
Loke anon that thou sende me vnto."
and thus jn the towr abod sche there,
A male child is born, tyl sche was deliuered jn hard manere,
and was deliuered of a knave child,
ugly and rough, that was bothen vnlouely & vn-myld.
and whanne this child was j-bore,
they merveilleden gretly that weren thore,
with its father's wits, For it hadde bothe wyt and knowenge
aftyr the schrewed fadris engendrynge.
but destined to be a servant of God on account of its mother's repentance, but, for the devel wrowhte so falsly,
God to his evs hath taken jt, trewly,
thorwgh the modris verray Repentaunce,
and for fulfylleng of hire penance,
and for hire good beleve jn holy chirche,
good deeds, and for the goode dedis that sche dyde wirche,
for that cawse nolde god jn non degre
that the devel with hym meddelid, Sikirle.
and ȝit the devel mad his engendryng,
For that of al thinges he scholde haue knowyng,
bothe þat js to comen and that js gon,
For many merveilles he thowghte be hym to don.
but oure lord knew the Repentance
Of his modyr, with-owten variaunce,
and innocence of the whole thing. and wiste ful wel that aȝens hire wille
that this aventure cam hire vntylle.
For the goode lord knew ful wel
that be hire wil sche synnede neuere a del,
and hym graunted bothe wit and knowenge
Of many thinges that weren comenge;

931. MS. *an hy.* 948. *hir'* corrected from *his.*
955. *dd* corrected afterwards from *an.*

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thus wolde God that he scholde knowe
of Manye thinges vppon a rowe.
For ȝif goddis wille it hadde j-be,
the devel schold han had his partye
and to God ȝelden that was his Ryht,
but that it likede to this lord of Myht
hym to taken jnto his power
and holych owt of the develis daunger.

Otherwise the devil would have had his share in the child.

Thus was there thanne this child j-bore,
of wheche these wommen dredden sore,
For more Rowghere that child it was
thanne Evere they Syen jn ony plas.
they schewed it thanne to þe Modyr anon,
sche took vpe hire hond and blessed hire thusson,
and Seyde anon: "so Crist me Spede,
For this child haue J gret drede."
Thanne seyden to Hyre these Wommen A-geyn:
"So for hym schalt thou suffren ful gret peyn."
thanne Comanded the Modir there
down it to leten Jn alle Manere—
"and that j-cristened anon it be,
thus j ȝow preye for charyte."
thanne axeden these wommen of hire anon
what Name they scholden leyn hym vppon.

The women in attendance are frightened at the sight of the infant.

So is the mother.

[leaf 92 *c*]

She has him christened at once,

. . . . . .
. . . . . .

anon leten they down this child there,
and that anon j-cristened it were,
and that jt Named scholde j-be
aftyr his grauntfadyr, ful sekerle,
whiche goodman that hyghte Merlyne,
that the devel gan so Engyne.
and thus this child j-cristened was,
and deliuered aȝen to þe Modris plas.

and calls him by her father's name, Merlin.

Thanne thus the Modyr Gan hym Norree,
tyl ten Mounthes old he was, Sekerle;
and with-jnne tho x mounthes he was so bold,

The child grows very fast.

968. *partye*, *y* corrected from *e*.
999. *mouthes* afterwards crossed out and replaced by *dayes*.

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that thyke tyme he semede two ȝeres old.
After 18 months the attendants want to go home, and whanne xviij mounthes weren fulliche j-past,
To the Modyr seiden thes wommen jn hast:
"dame, fulfayn wolde we hennes ben
and to owre owne place hom gon aȝen,
For certein thinges we han to do;
Sykerly, dame, we wylen the fro."
thanne spak aȝen the Modyr anon:
but are persuaded to stay yet for a while. "ȝif it so be, ȝe from me gon,
anon be jugement j schal ben ded,
For j ne knowe non other Red."
thanne wepte this Modyr and made sory chere,
and preyde hem with hire abyden ȝit there.
thanne ȝit stylle they gonne abyde,
and to a prevy wyndowe wente þat tyde.
and the Modir this child gan beholde,
The mother weepingly says to the child in her arms & there jn hire armes sche gan it folde;
Anon ful tendirly wepte sche thanne,
& thus sche seide to this ȝong Manne:
"a, Faire sone," quod sche thanne tho,
that she must die for its sake, "for the moste j suffre bothe deth & wo,
and to me ben j-put ful Mochel hard peyne,
the wheche is wrong, god wot certeyne.
For there Nis non Man, but god alone,
that whot how this cause doth gone;
as nobody believes her. but this non Man wil beleven, certeinle,
wherfore j moste nedis ded now be,
and thus with gret wrong j schal suffre ded."
Sore wepyng thus seide sche jn that sted.
And as the Modyr this Mone Gan Make,
The child says she shall not. hire sone on hire lokede with Eyn so blake,
and seide: "modir, dismaye the nowht,
for fore me schalt þou neuere to deth be browht."
whanne that the Modyr herde hym so speke,
In her fright, she drops it; the child cries, the women rush thither. For drede sche let it owt of hire armes Reke,
so that for drede the child fyl a-down,
and gan to cryen with a gret Sown.
thanne comen anon these wommen, certayn,

1001. *mouthes* afterwards crossed out and replaced by *dayes*.

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and wenden, the MODYR the child wolde han slayn,
and they axeden hire, why the child ferde so.
"for, sekerly, j was neuere so wo,
Nethere j ne hadde neuere so gret fere;
That made hym fallen owt of myn armes here,
and that made hym so lowde to crye.
But of A MERVEYL J sey 3ow, sekerlye,
that this child hath spoken to ME;
3e wolde han wondred hit forto han se!"
"what, spak thanne he the vnto?"
"3e, sekerly, now dyde he so."
"what seide he thanne? telle vs now here."
"that Schal j doon with RYHT good chere;
he seide j scholde neuere ded for hym be;
thus he me Seyde, ful Sykerle."
"but Seyde he ony othir thing?"
"Nay, forsothe, with-owten lesyng."
thanne gonne they the child to kyssen and brase,
3if it to hem wolde speken jn that plase;
but non word of him ne cowde they gete,
thowgh they him kyste neuere so swete.
but on a day þe modir calde hem hire vnto,
and thus to hem sche seide tho:
"MANASE 3e me for hym vppon a day,
and to hym MAKE som gret afray,
and seith that for hym j schal be brent,
be stoned to dethe and al j-schent."
For the MODYR desirede ful sore
That to-forn hem wolde he speken thore.
"a ful gret ROWTHE it is of the,"
Seiden these wommen, "ful sekerle,
that so fair a body as thou art on,
of hyde, of hewe, of flesch & bon,
that thou schalt for this fowle thing
ben browht so sone to a fowl ENDYNG.
bettyr it hadde have neuere be bore
thanne thy faire body for hym scholde be lore."
"Now certes," quod this MERLYNE tho,

1040 The mother tells them of all,

1044 [leaf 92 *d*]

that the child has spoken,

1048

and what it has said.

1052

1056 They then try to make it speak to them also, but in vain.

1060 Later on, the mother advises them to speak, in her son's presence, of her death for his sake.

1064

So they do,

1068

1072

and Merlin speaks angrily.

1047. *he* added above the line. 1057. MS. *hem*.
1059. *modir* added above the line. 1061. MS. *hym*.

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"ȝe lyen, false schrewes, bothe two,
of that ȝe han my MODYR told,
for þerto schal neuere man be so bold."
They are frightened, and say he must be a devil.
and whanne they syen hym so on take,
For drede and sorwe they gonne to qwake,
and seiden: "This ne MAY non child be:
Jt is the devel, ful Sykirle.
that we han seid, doth it vs here telle;
we supposen, it be a devel of helle."
thanne aposid they him of wordis MO,
and thus to hem he Seide vnto:
He replies by telling them about their secret sins.
"ȝe han don wel moche more Synne
thanne my modyr, that is here with-jnne."
Anon they MERveylled mochel More,
that he cowde tellen thinges, weren don to-fore.
"we schole gon tellen to hem that be-NEthe be,
how this child doth Speken, Sekyrle."
They run to the window, and inform the people.
thanne to this wyndowe comen they anone,
and cleped the peple to hem fulsone,
and tolden how þat the child spak there,
& howgh that he seyde and jn what MANere.
thussone so wyde this tydyng sprong,
The judge hears about it,
that to the jugge it cam ER owht long,
where-offen he MERveillede wondir sore,
that jn swich MANER the child spak thore.
thanne bespak the justice anon:
"Now were it tyme, juggement to don!"
and sente anon to that Jayller
That jn the towre hem kepte ther,
and fixes the day for her trial.
that at the ENde of xl dawes
to bringen hire forth to han hire lawes.
whanne the MODYR of MERlyn herde this,
That set was the day of hire, j-wys,
Fvl mochel Sorwe made sche thanne,
She sends for the hermit. [leaf 93 *a*]
and sente anon aftyr this good MANne,
That Hire Was Wont to confessen before;
aftyr hym sente sche to comen to hire thore.
Thus dwelde sche algates stille

1104. *That* through correction at the end.

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the dayes of juggement to fulfille.
and whanne they weren past Everichon
Except viij dayes, that weren not gon, 1116
thanne lyvede sche jn sorwe and care, During her grief and anguish,
and wiste neuere thanne how sche schold fare,
but that sche scholde brend j-be;
sche knew non othir, ful Sykerle. 1120
and al this tyme wente hire sone, jn feye, her son is unconcerned.
abowte jn the towr and him gan to pleye.
thanne seiden these wommen to him anon:
"Ful litel thenkest þou what is to don, 1124 The women reprove him.
and how this wyke, ful Sikerle,
thy modir for the moste nedis brend j-be."
Thanne be-spak Merlyn anon He tells his mother again not to be afraid,
to his modir there thussone: 1128
"Now, faire modyr, j 3ow praye,
For me non thing that 3e dismaye,
for there js non man on lyve here
that 3ow schal demen jn non manere, 1132
Neþer neuere 3ow juggen to þe ded,
whiles that j lyve, jn non sted,
Ne neuere non deth to suffren, j-wys, for she shall not die.
Sauf onlich be god, that almyhty js." 1136
whanne the modyr vndirstood this,
thanne was sche ful of joye & blis,
and seide: "this child moste nedis wys be,
Swich thynges to tellen now, Sykerle." 1140
thus bod sche tyl the same day On the appointed day,
that to juggement scholde sche gon, jn fay,
that owt of the towr was sche do,
and the tweyne wommen with hire also, 1144
and hire sone in hyre arm sche bar,
tyl to-fore the jugges that sche cam thar. she appears before the judges, who
thanne the justice at that tyde ask the
thike two women token beside, 1148 women if the child had really
and of hem axeden, with-owten lak, spoken,
3if it were soth that the child spak.
thanne tolden hem tho wommen verrayly

1139. MS. *seiden*.

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how that he to hem Spak apertly. 1152

and remark that much wisdom is required to save its mother.

thanne seide the jugge to hem ageyn :
" ful mochel moste he konnen & knowen, certayn,
3if he schole owht his Modyr Save,
Mochel More konneng Moste he have." 1156
and be this jlke same tyme,
as that it happede the owr of pryme,

The hermit, who has arrived in the meantime,

this goodman to hire was comen ful Ryht,
that hire thanne scholde cownceillen aryht. 1160
thanne seide on of the jugges hire vnto :
" hast þou ony cownseil, what wylt thou do ?
for Martirdom thou most Suffren here ;
good cownseil to the now profyt were." 1164
thanne answerid this womman agayn :
" with this good man wolde j speken fulfayn."
and they hire 3oven leve therto.

has a private consultation with his confessant,

so jnto a chambre they gonne to go, 1168
and hire sone beleft with-owte
amonges the peple, a ful gret Rowte ;
and with speche they gonnen hym asaylle,
but lytel owther nowht it dyde avaylle. 1172
and al this while that jt was so,
his Modir hire confessour spak vnto.
& whanne sche hadde told hym al hire wylle,

[leaf 93 b] Thanne spak the confessour Hire vntylle, 1176

during which he also is assured that the child has spoken.

and axede hire 3if it certeyn were
that hire sone spak so there.
" 3e, sire," sche seide, " certeynly,
to me hath he spoken, ful verrayly." 1180
" Jn goddis Name," quod this good Man tho,
" j hope, som Merveilles it wele tornen vnto."

She reappears in court,

thanne comen they owt bothe jn fere,
and comen jnto place as þe jugges were, 1184
and took hire child jn hire armes two,
Ryht so to-fore the jugge sche gan to go.
thus stood sche to-forn hem, certaygne.
anon the jugge gan hire Refreyne, 1188

is asked about her child's father,

and axede hire ho þat the fadyr were
of that child that sche held there.
thanne answerid the Modyr with gret pite :

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"j wot not othir but ded to be;
but so god on my Sowle haue Mercye,
Medlid j neuere with mannes compenye,
Ne neuere j wiste ho þat the fadyr was,
Neþer neuere knew j Man jn that cas,
Ne Neuere obeyed to non Man, Sykerle,
that sweche thinges scholde don by me."
"3e, 3e," quod this justices tho,
"we konnen not beleven that it is so
as thou dost vs to vndirstonde;
Jt was neuere provid jn non londe."
thanne tooken the jugges these wommen on side,
and axeden 3if swich a thing myhte be-tyde,
that a woman a child scholde bere
whiche neuere jn Mannes compeny ne were.
thanne seiden they: "Nay, ful sikyrle,
with-owten Mannes compenye it myhte not be."
Thanne seiden these jugges to hyre ageyn
that—"ded nedys most 3e ben, certayn,
for thus wommen seyn, trewely,
that with-owten Mannes compeny
a child neuere scholdest thou have;
thus they me seyn, so god me save!"
thanne owt of his Modris armes stirt Merlyne anon,
and angerlich seide toforn hem Echon:
"that schalt þou Nevere, justice, bringen abowte,
My Modyr to brennen, with-owten dowte,
For sche ne hath not deservid therto.
and 3it more J schal sein the also,
that 3if trewe jostice thou schost be
To alle that han don avowtre
with oþere thanne with here lordis, certeyn,
of mo thanne of two partes that is here pleyn,
thow schost hem brennen al jn fere,
More than twey partes of wommen that ben here.
and my Modyr was neuere 3it Gylty
with non Man jn Swich Maner of foly;
but swich a body as hire was take,

and declares that she knows not.

The judges say they cannot believe her,

ask also the two women on the point,

and declare she must die.

Then Merlin suddenly intervenes.

His mother is guiltless, he says,

but more than two-thirds of the women present are guilty.

1194. MS. *compenye.*

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sche hath forth browht with grot wrake.
and, Sire justice, but thou leve me,
axe this good man here openle." 1232

The hermit is asked, and testifies her innocence,

the justices axeden this goodman tho
3if it be—"as he seith vs vnto."
"3e," quod this good man, "ful Sekerly,
sche hath me told ful feithfully, 1236
ful often & with ful weping chere,
that jn mannes compenye neuere sche were,
but that welfowle encombred sche was
the devil being the offender. with the fals enemy jn hire owne plas, 1240
hire thus encombrede jn slepyng;
[leaf 93 c] And vppon my Sowle to taaken this thing.
but jn alle my lyf here before
herde j nevere of swich thing spoken ore." 1244

Merlin reminds the hermit of the book.

thanne spak merlyne a3en ryht tho,
and this goodman spak vnto:
"3e han it don j-wreten Jn a book,
my concepsiown, and 3e wyle lok, 1248
and þerby mown 3e ful wel knowe
the lyveng of my modir al this throwe."
"thou seist soth," quod this good man,
"lytel wot thy modyr whens þat thou cam." 1252

The women are questioned,

thanne cleped they forth these two wommen,
and axeden hem whe þer it were so then,
& also enqwerede aftyr thengendrure
and aftyr his birthe, j 3ow ensure. 1256

and their testimony agrees with the book.

3if that the goode holy mannes book
and they acorden, they wylen look.
So that these wommen and the book acordid wel,
of the goodmannes wrytyng, everydel. 1260

Yet the judges are not satisfied.

3it thanne seide the justices tho,
For this scholde sche be qwyt neuere the mo.

Merlin, growing angry,

Thanne merlyn gan to wraththen hym Sore,
and ful angerly to the justice spak thore: 1264
"J knowe moche Bettere my fadyr, Jn fay,
thanne thou dost thyn, J dar wel Say,

1239. *welfowle*, *w* through correction.
1249. *3e* added above the line.

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and thy Modyr knoweth bettere, certeinly,
ho that the be-gat, j telle þe feythfully,
Bettere thanne My modyr, j sey 3ow pleyn,
For sche knew neuere my Fadyr, jn certeyn.
and therfore, Sire Justice, J telle to the
that thy Modyr More worthy Js, brent to be,
For sche is fals to hire lord so dere,
and so was neuere my modyr jn non Manere."
thanne was this justice wondyr angry tho,
and thus to that child he Spak vnto:
"3if of my Modir Swich thing thow konne seye,
J schal the holden for trewe, jn feye."
thanne seide Merlyn a3en to hym there:
"Ful wel knowe j thy Modrys Manere,
that moche More sche hath decerved to be ded
thanne Evere dyde my Modyr jn ony sted.
and but 3if thou fynde that j trewe seye,
hardylich let Ellis my modyr deye."
thanne seide the justyse to hym ageyn:
"3if thou konne proven that thou seist pleyn,
Thy modyr from brenneng schalt thou save,
and al thyn owne axeng thou schalt have . . .
but Natheles, and it be as thou dost telle,
thanne schal j don brenne bothe ful snelle,
bothe Myn owne Modyr and Ek thyn,
and Bryngen hem bothe to a schort fyn."
"that schal Neuere lyn Jn thy powere
My Modyr to deth to putten here,
whiles that thou lyvest here, ony threwe,
For 3if nede be, mo Skiles j schal the Schewe."

brings an accusation against the chief judge's mother.

The irate judge tells him to prove it, and his mother shall be free.

Merlin says he can.

The judge first renews his promise,

then threatens to burn both the mothers.

Merlin defies him.

Thanne anon Respyt gonnen they take
For the justices Modris Sake,
xv dayes thanne next Sewenge,
hire forto bringen to Rekenenge,
and diden hire seke bothe fer & Nygh,
To hire answere to comen apertly.

A summons is sent to the judge's mother.

1268. *that*, *at* blurred. 1274. *so* added above the line.
1284. *modyr*, *r* on erasure.
1295. *threwe*, the first *e* corrected from *o*.

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In the meantime, Merlin remains silent.

and jn the mene while they enqwered there
of that child Jn diuers manere,
but neuere to hem wolde he speken non word,
Tyl the day cam of here acord,
and whanne this womman comen was,
[leaf 93 d] The Justices modyr, Jnto that plas.

On her arrival, Merlin is confronted with her before the people.

thus cam the justices modyr thedyr jn hye;
thanne merlyn was after sent, trewlye,
owt of preson Jn hasty manere
to-forn the peple to comen there.
thanne seide the justice to merlyn tho:
"lo, here my modir, that thou spoke offen so!"

He suggests more private proceedings, indoors.

thanne seyde the child to hym ageyn:
"thou ne art ful wys, j telle the pleyn!
Tak thy modyr jnto a chambre anon
and of thy beste frendes, and þedir 3e gon,
and þere to-foren 3ow J schal come
Jn excuseng of my modyr al & Some,
which that knoweth god almyhty
and also hire confessour, ful sothfastly."

Nobody objects.

thanne abasched weren they Sore,
that they ne cowde Speken wordis no more.

When in the room, Merlin puts some preliminary questions to the judge,

thanne seide merlyne to hem echon:
"3if j delyvere my modir of this cryme anon,
schal sche thanne ony more jn warde be
for 3ow oþer for ony of this meyne?"
thanne answerid the justice to hym ageyn:
"sche schal ben ful qwyt thanne, jn certayn."
thanne seide the justyce to merlyn tho:
"now sey to my modyr that thou kanst do,
be whiche thy modir qwit scholde be;
haue j-do, and sey on here to-fore me!"

and indicates the connection of the two cases.

"j schal non thing vppon thy modyr seye
but that schal my modyr aqwyten, jn good feye.
and 3if sche have forfeted wyllyng,
j wile that thou to deth hire bryng.
hast not thou enswred me
and also my modyr, ful certeinle,

1315. MS. *juſt* crossed out after *the*.
1320. *al*, *l* corrected from *c*.

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ȝif j may hire delyveren here,
qwit to Gon jn alle Manere?"
"that is ful trewe," quod the justice,
"and thou it conne don be ony wyse."
"Now, justice," quod Merlyne thanne anon,
"My Modyr thou acusest to-forn vs Echon,
For that j am of hire j-bore,
and þat sche Not ho me Engendrid thore.
but j kan bettere my Modir telle
hos sone that j was, ful snelle,
thanne thou kanst, j dar wel say,
ho was thy fadyr, be ony way.
and also thy Modyr the can tellen bettir, j-wis,
ho that the be-gat and thy fadyr Js,
thanne My Modyr can tellen Me,
oþer Evere cowde jn ony degre,
hos Sone that j was,
sche cowde neuere tellen jn noⁿ plas."
Thanne spak þe justice to his Modir dere:
"hos sone was j, that stond now here?
was j not ȝowre sone Jn trewe acord
be-twixen ȝow and ȝowre husbonde & lord?"
"A ȝis, fayre Syre, ful Sykerle!
hos sone Ellis scholde ȝe be,
but his sone that now ded Is?
j sey ȝow, dere sone, with-owten Mys."
"dame," quod Merlyne, "ȝow behoveth here
the Sothe to Seyen Jn alle Manere.
For but ȝif thy Sone qwyte now Me
and also my modyr, that here ȝe se,
No More Entermeten j ne schal,
and ȝit scholen we gon qwyt of al!"
"ȝis," quod the justice anon tho,
"Sey on now more what þou canst do."
"Wel," quod Merlyne, "thanne schal J say:
thy fadir is ȝit onlyve thys day
be wytnesse of thin owne Modyr here."
thanne beheld the justice his Modir there.

1344 Merlin then rehearses the accusation brought against his own mother,

1348

and his own accusation against the judge's mother.

1352

1356

The judge asks his mother, if he is not the son of her late husband.

1360

She declares he is.

1364

Merlin exhorts her to tell the truth,

1368

1372

[leaf 94 *a*]

and says that the judge's father is still alive.

1376

1349. *telle* crossed out after *my*.
1370. *modyr*, *o* corrected from *y*.

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"jt be-houeth," quod Merlyne, "that ȝe here telle
ho was ȝoure sones fadyr, ful snelle,
For wel ȝe weten, his Fadyr he Nas
Of hym that he supposith jn this plas."

The lady is confused.

thanne baschet the Lady wondir sore,
& axede Merlyne hos sone Ellis he wore.
"Ful wel knowest thou," quod Merlyn tho,
"that thou seist, it Nis not So,

Merlin states further that the judge's father is a priest,

but a prestis sone of ȝowre he js;
this woste thou wel, with-owten Mys,
be this same tokene, j telle the,
that thou to hym seidest in prevyte.
Ne hadde ȝe but Selde to-gederis leyn,

reveals her intimate conversation with her lover,

that to hym thou seydest, ful pleyn,
that be hym with childe thou were;
and he seide: 'Nay, haue ȝe non fere!'
thanne seide he, that scholde neuere be,
Be hym with childe gon, Sykerle.
and for this skele thus seide he, trewelye,
For thou schost Medlen with non Mannes compenye.
and ȝit More dyde he therto:

his noting down of each coition,

as often as he with ȝow Medlyd so,
he put jt anon jn Scripture;
that j seye, is soth, j ȝow Ensure.
thanne was jt told to ȝoure lord
of ȝoure Manere, every word,

and her false oaths to her husband.

but with fals othes ȝe to hym dyd swere
that it not so was Jn non Manere.
thanne vnnethis wolde ȝe abyde,
but to þe preest wente anon that tyde,
and seiden to hym with-owten wordis Mo:
'Me js be-tyd ful Mochel wo,
that thus with childe be ȝow am j,
J am ful wo-be-gon now, trewly!'

He then asks if it is not true.

dame, js not this trowthe, that j now say?
And here to-fore me sey ȝe other Nay!

1383. *baſchet*, *b* apparently through correction.
1387. *of* (?) added above the line; *ȝ* through correction, blurred.
1394. *he*, *h* corrected from *ſ*.
1396. *childe*, *d* through correction, blurred.

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and 3if thow wylt not the sothe beknowe,
Mochel wers schal j sein aforn al this Rowe." 1416
"Modyr," quod the justice, "is this trewe?" She still denies it.
"what, sone, levest thou this schrewed hewe?"
"A," quod Merlyne, "wylt thou thanne so, Merlin goes on to state
thanne schal j telle what thou dist mo. 1420
whanne that thou knew certeyn, þou were *with* childe,
thow wentest to purchase, as a womman ful Mylde, that she bought her husband's silence,
be the same preest, thi pes to have,
of thin owne lord, he scholde þe save, 1424
and that his owne it was Eche del,
the wheche was fals, thou knew ful wel.
and sethen that tyme, J sey 3ow here, continued her adulterous
haven 3e bothe lyved that lyf jn fere, 1428 life with the priest,
and 3it 3e lyven bothe jn-to this day;
Takith this for trowthe, as j 3ow say.
and the Nyht to-fore that 3e scholde gone, and spent with him the
that preest, to 3ow he cam fulsone, 1432 very last night before her de-
and browht 3ow a gret pece on the weye, parture.
and thus to 3ow tho gan he seye:
'loke that jn alle thyng 3e fulfille
that my sone to 3ow schal sein vntylle.'" 1436

Whanne the justices Modyr herde hym so seyn,
and that he seide, was trowthe, ful pleyn,
Thanne gan sche Syghen & Maken gret Mone. Then the judge's
Thanne thus sche thowhte be hire-selve Alone, 1440 [leaf 94 b]
that Nedis the trowthe Moste sche Seye mother breaks down,
o*þer* elles to ben confowndid vtterlye.
thanne hire sone seide to hire ageyn:
"hos sone j am, telleth me now pleyn. 1444
For wel j wot, J am 3oure child,
& to 3ow j am bothe Mek and Myld.
Telle me now trowthe, j 3ow preye,
of that this child doth here Seye!" 1448
"Now, Swete sone, haue Mercy on Me! and pleads guilty.
as he Seyth, it is, ful Sekyrle."
"ha thanne," quod the justice tho,

1440. *thowhte*, *ht* through correction.
1443. *seide* added above the line.

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The judge understands that Merlin's mother is innocent,

"Now j se wel how it doth go!
this child knoweth bettere his fadyr, j-wis,
thanne j do myn, with-owten mys.
Now se j that it were non resown
thy modir oþer the to don distrocciown.
For for goddis love, telle þou me here
what maner of wyht thy fadyr were."

and implores him to name his father.

Merlin relates

thanne seide merlyne to hym ageyn:
"that schal j gladliche, jn certeyn,
more for thy love thanne for thy drede,
j sey the certeyn, so god me spede!
Syre, j wele that thou knowe, trewely,
that on my mody[r] me engendred the enemy.
For Sweche Spirites as they be,
ben j-cleped equibedes, j telle the;
and from the eyr jnto the erthe they gon
Swich maner of werkys here forto don.
And knowe thou wel, justice, certeinlye,
that j haue bothe here wyt and memorye,
and by hem knowe j ful wel
thy modris werkyng everydel.
For thinges that ben past, j knowe,
and thinges that ben comeng vppon a rowe.
And also it is owre lordis wille
that bothe wit & memorye j schal have þere-tylle
on his behalve, more thanne a naturel man
jn this erththe knoweth oþer kan,
for the love of my modir so dere,
that hire penaunce fulfilde here,
that the goodman ȝaf hire jn charge
(sche it fulfylde bothe fully and large);
that so be vertu of hire goodnesse
God graunttyd me ȝit more largesse:
to knowen thynges that weren comenge,
J sey the, justice, with-owten lesynge.
and this schalt þou proven eyht wel
and the sothe to knowen every del."

that his father is an evil spirit of the order called "Equibedes,"

and that he has the mental capacities of those spirits to know things past, and to come,

on God's behalf,

for his pious mother's sake.

To prove this,

1464. MS. *than on my mody*; in *engendred* the *e* of the second syllable is corrected from *r*.
1468. *werkys*, *r* corrected from *k*.

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Anon he took the justice on syde,
& thus him told that jlke tyde : he predicts
"Thy MODYR wil discoueren me anone,
come sche hom ones, neuere so sone, 1492
and tellen to him that the be-gat,
alle that j haue to the seid and what.
and whanne that he wot al this,
For drede of þe thanne wyle he fleen, j-wys. 1496 the tragic end of the priest.
thanne the devel, whos servaunt he hath be,
to a water schal leden hym ful pryvyle,
and þere he schal hym-self distroye,
his owne Sowle to gret anoye. 1500
and hereby myhtest þou haue knoweng
that j can tellen of thinges comeng."
"Now, and it be trewe as thou tellest me,
Evere schal j the trosten ful feith-fulle, 1504 The judge declares that if that comes true, he will ever believe him.
and Neuere j schal the MISBELEVE
For non MAN that owht can on þe preve."

Thanne thus owt of cownseyl gonnen they go, [leaf 94 c]
and to-fore the peple come they tho, 1508 They go out again to the people,
and there schewed the justice anon, Sykerle,
that ful wel aqwit his MODYR hadde he, and Merlin's mother is released.
bothe be good RESOWN and be RYHT—
"thus hath he his MODYR from the deth now dyht." 1512
thanne joyeden the peple EVERYCHON, The people rejoice.
and thankede god he hadde so don.
So thus delyverede MERLYNE tho
his MODYR from Brenneng, peyne, & wo. 1516
and MERLYNE with the justice belefte Stylle,
For he thowhte to werkyn aftyr his wylle, The judge sends two spies to watch his mother.
and sente tweyne MEN with his MODIR anon,
To weten how that cawse scholde goon, 1520
also to knowen 3if it trewe were
that this chyld hath told hym there.
Assone as his MODYR hom comen was, Arrived home, she tells the priest everything.
sche tolde the preest al the cas 1524
of the MERveilles EVERYCHON

1496. MS. *of* þe, added above the line.
1515. *So, S* corrected from *a*. 1516. MS. *Brēnnēg*.

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that toforn hire sone was seid & don.
Anon as the preest herde of this,
fulsore thanne was he astoned, j-wis,
He is afraid of the judge, and supposid the justice wold hym slo.
thanne wyste he Neuere what to do,
but owt of the town he wente anon,
and drowns himself. Thanne to a Ryvere he cam thus son,
and þere he dyde hym-Self dystroye,
For the justice hym schold not anoye.
lo, thus the devel with hym wrowhte,
tyl that he hadde browht hym to nowhte.
and this openly Syen thike twey Men,
The spies report it to the judge. that hom with that lady comen then;
and whanne to the juge they comen ageyn,
of alle this aventure they tolden hym, certeyn.
& whanne the justice herde al this,
anon he Merveillede ful gretly, j-wis,
and there to Merlyn told it thus sone;
thanne began this Merlyn to lawhen anone.
On Merlin's request, "Now j preye the, justice," quod Merlyn tho,
"that to holy Blase thou wost tellen this vnto,
wich that is My Modris confessour,
a ful holy Man Jn Everych owr."
the judge tells it to the hermit, the holy Blasy. thanne tolde the justice to Blase, ful pleyn,
how that this aventure befyl, certeyn.
thanne wente Merlyn and his Modyr jn fere,
the justice and Blase, alle to-gederis there,
and wente whider hem likede best,
Jnto what place as hem best lest.
Blasy wonders at the child's faculties, This Blasye a worthy clerk he was,
and Mochel Merveille hadde in þat plas
that so ȝong a child as was he,
Swich wit scholde haue jn ony degre,
that but two ȝer and an half he was old,
and that he was so wis, so Redy, and so bold;
he Merveillede whens it scholde be,
and tests him in many ways. & assaied Merlyne jn ful Many degre.
thanne seide Merlyne to hym ageyn:

1533. *dystroye*, the first *y* corrected from *r*.

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"Þe more that Þou me asayeest, jn certeyn,
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
ȝif thou wilt me trosten and beleve,
of the love of god j schal the preve,
the whiche to Endeles lyf it schal Þe brynge,
and thou wilt don aftyr My techinge."
thanne answerede this Blasye ageyn:
"what? toforn this tyme j haue herd seyn
that only the develis sone thou were,
How schost thow thanne swich thynges Don Here?"
"lo," quod Merlyne, "a custowme it Js
of alle schrewed hertis, J-wys,
that [they] Rathere the Evel thanne good scholen speke,
on here Em-cristene to ben awreke.
thou seist, the develis sone that j am,
as Þou myhtest han seid, from god Þat j cam,
and that he graunted me bothe wit & Memorye;
what schold it han greved the thus to seye?
For it is goddis wille that j knowe
thinges to-comeng vppon a Rowe,
only for the same Enchesown
that Þe devel hath me forgon.
and ȝit haue j not * Myn Engyneng,
that of kynde j hadde atte begynneng,
but of me scholen they Neuere han power,
for that han they lost Everywher,
For me to putten jn so worthy a vessel,
of wheche hadde they part neuere a del,
and jn Swich a Maner conceyved they Me,
For they knew not of goddis prevyte.
and Þerfore alle j-lost they bene;
of this be thou Seker and not jn wene.
and loke thou beleve that j schal seyn,
For of Merveilles j schal tellen the, ful pleyn,
of whiche thow wylt haue gret Merveyllyng,

1564 1568 1572 1576 1580 1584 1588 1592 1596

Merlin asks Blasy to trust him.

Blasy reminds him of the fact that he is the devil's son.

[leaf 94 d]

Merlin reproves him,

and says he has come from God,

as God has given him divinatory power,

and the devils have lost their share in him.

He asks him again to believe in his predictions,

1564. *a/ayeeſt*, the first *a* squeezed in afterwards.
1567. *Endeles*, *E* partly obliterated. 1575. MS. *that Rathere*.
1585. A participle (*forgon*, *j-loſt*, *loſt*?) is missing.
1592. *they* added above the line.

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how sweche wyttes myhte jnto ony man synk.

and write them in a book.

Blayse, anon that thow make a book,
for here-aftyr many man schal þer-on look." 1600
thanne seide Blayse to merlyne anon:
"A book may j do maken ful sone,

Blasy conjures Merlin not to deceive him.

but j coniowre þe be on god of myhtes most,
which is fadir, sone, & holygost, 1604
that thou nowht deceyve me,
Nethir be thy werk engyned to be,
Ne to werkyn non thing ayens goddis wylle,
Ne nothyng to don that scholde plesen hym ylle." 1608

Merlin promises to forsake whatever Blasy finds wrong.

"ha, Sire Blayse," quod merlyne tho,
"and j ayens goddis wille ony thing do,
Loke that þou telle it me anon,
and j wele beleven jt thusson. 1612
but gete the bothe penne, jnke, and parchemyn,
this book to be-gynnen and Bryngen to fyn,
and j schal the tellen every del
how that this book þou schalt wryten ful wel." 1616

Blasy gets his writing materials,

Thanne Blayse anon, so god me save,
dide ordeynen alle things him Nedid to have;
and whanne that al thing redy was,

and Merlin tells him

thanne cam merlyn jnto that plas, 1620
and anon be-gan him telle

of Christ,

of cristes deth, how it befelle,

of Joseph of Arimathia,

also of Josepe of armathye,
how of hym it happede, trewelye, 1624
and of Aleyn, and of Perown also,
& of his compenye, how they departid tho.
and thus endyd he of josepe there
& of al his Feleschepe also jn fere, 1628
and gan to tellen hym furthere more

and of the consultation of the devils.

of þe parlement of þe develis thore,
and how thei conseylled hem be-twen
that a child jn the erthe jbore schold ben 1632
that here wyt scholde haue & ek memorye,

1598. *man* corrected from *many*.
1603. þe squeezed in afterwards.
1631. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.

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the peple to deceyven ful falslye.
" and be my modir thou hast herd telle
how hire deceyveden the fendis so felle,
but be here owne fals folye
They han me lost, As J the seye."

The history of Merlin's mother did Blasy know already.

[leaf 95 *a*]

al this werk thus Began *Merlyne*,
and Blasye it Browhte to ful good fyne;
and evere the lengere that Blasye gan wryte,
the bettere hym thowhte he cowde endyte;
and eu*ere* the more this Mater gan he drawe,
evere the bettere he lykede *Merlynes* Sawe.
thanne *Merlyn* to Blayse cam anon,
& *þere* to hym he seide thus son:
" Blasye, thou shalt Suffren gret peyne
This storye to an ende to bringen, certeyne,
and ȝit schal j Suffren mochel more."
" how so, *Merlyn*?" quod Blasye thore.
" j schal be sowht," quod *Merlyne* tho,
" Owt from the west, w*ith* Messengeris mo;
and they that scholen com*en* to seken me,
they han maad Sewrawnce, j telle the,
me forto slen for ony thing;
this sewrawnce han they mad to here kyng.
but whanne they me sen & w*ith* me speke,
No*n* power they schole han on me to ben awreke;
For with hem hens moste j gon,
and thou jnto othir partyes schalt welson,
To hem that han the holy vessel
which that js J-cleped the seynt Graal.
and wete thow wel and ek forsothe
that thow and ek this storye bothe,
ful wel beherd now schal it be
and also Beloved Jn many contre."
and hos that wil knowe*n* jn certaygne
what kynges that were*n* jn grete Bretaygne,
Sethen that Cristendom thedyr was Browht,

The work at the book goes well.

Merlin predicts difficulties in its continuation,

seeing that he himself will have to go to a strange land,

and Blasy to the regions of the Holy Graal.

For the early history of Great Britain,

1637. *be* added above the line.
1662. *J cleped*, *J* corrected from *c*.

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the reader is referred to Martin de Beure's "History of Brute."

They scholen hem fynde, hos so that it sowht,
jn the Story of Brwttes book;
there scholen ȝe it fynde, and ȝe welen look; 1672
which that Martyn de Bewre traunslated here
From latyn jnto Romaunce jn his Manere.
but leve we now of Brwtes book,
and aftyr this storye now lete vs look. 1676

Chap. II.

King Costantin of Britain

[leaf 95 *b*]

Jn Bretaygne somtyme a kyng there was
That costantyn was clepid jn that plas,
Wheche that A gret Whyle Regnede there,
and was a Man of ful gret powere. 1680

has three sons:

and thre sones hadde that same kyng,
whiche that weren but Bachelerys ȝyng.

Costantin,

the Eldest Sone costantyn hyghte;
the secund Awrely Ambros was clepyd Ryhte, 1684

Pendragon,

Owther Pendragon, whethyr ȝe wylen haue;

and Uter.

the thrydde hyhte vter, so god me Save!

His greatest vassal is Fortager.

this costantyn hadde a Man jn his lond
That hyghte Fortager, as j vndirstond; 1688
This Fortager was holden a ful wis Man.
and happede costantyn an old Man was than,

When the king dies,

So that be Nature of kynde he deyde.
thanne the cownseyl amonges hem Seyde, 1692
and axeden ho scholde ben here kyng.
Anon thus becomen they jn Emparlyng.
thussone thanne acordid they Everychon

his eldest son, Costantin, becomes king,

the Eldest Sone to Maken kyng anon, 1696
whiche that hyghte costantyn
(Fulsone of his Regne Made he his fyn);
for aȝens Resown hadde it be
ony oþer kyng to han Mad, sekerle. 1700

with the good will of Fortager,

To this Emparlyng acordyd fortager
and also alle the Barowns that weren ther.
so that alle the cownseylle assented, Sykerle,
That this Fortager Styward schold be, 1704

1670. *it* added above the line.
1681. *hadde* added above the line.
1686. *The* corrected from *Te*. 1690. *an*, *a* corrected from *o*.

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bothe the kyng and the Rewm to governen alle, and under his protection.
what Maner of aventures so Myhte befalle.
And thus this Fortager, jn certeyn,
of al that Rem his wil he hadde, ful pleyn,
Sawf only Constans ocupied the crowne,
but More governaunce ne hadde he, nethir vpe ne downe.
So that this Fortager, beloved & dred he was Fortager is both loved and dreaded.
Ouer al the Rewm, jn Every plas;
For bothen wys and witty he was holde,
but ouerprowd wax he Mani folde.
For jn that Rewm, jn non degre
Myhte non man so Moche don as dyde he.
So that hit happede vppon a day One day, a hostile fleet lands.
that there aryvede a Navye with gret aray.
Thanne the kyng wente anon to Fortager, King Costantin goes to Fortager for help,
and anon fulfaire hym preyde ther
his Lond to helpen forto defende
with oþer helpe he wolde aftyr sende.
"For we ben alle at 3owre comandement,
bothen j & al this Rewm, verament."
"Syre," quod Fortager to the kyng, but is refused.
"the peple of 3oure hauen me jn hatyng;
therfore let hem helpen now 3ow here,
For j ne schal Entermeten jn non Manere,
Nethyr for non Man that doth me praye,
Ne for non thing that ony man kan saye."

Whanne that kyng costantyn herde this, The king returns home,
and Ek þe peple þat with him þere was, j-wis,
That of hym Socour scholde they han non,
homwardis a3en they gonne to gon,
and ordeyned hem jn Eche degre
with here Enemyes to fyhten, ful sekyrle. and is defeated by his enemies.
but of here Enemyes Scomfyted they were,
and anon to the flyht they weren put there,
and losten Manye of here Meyne,
Of wheche dethes was gret pyte,

1719. *wente*, added above the line.
1737. *Scomfyted they*, *d t* damaged (hole in the paper).

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[leaf 95 c] And seyden that thyke los Hem not scholde Han falle,
and Fortager hadde ben amongis hem alle.

The people grow dissatisfied with the king,

that so towardis the kyng they fillen jn hate,
and from hym witdrowen bothe erly and late, 1744
So that of evel herte they seiden hem be-twene
that he non lengere here kyng Schold beene.
Thanne to this Fortager comen they anon,

and ask Fortager to be king instead.

and þere to him they seiden thus son: 1748
"Sire, with-owten kyng we be,
and that is nowht worth, Sire, parde;
So that for goddis love be thou kyng
azens owre enemyes jn defendyng. 1752
For we knowen non man jn al this lond
That so wel vs scholde governe, as j vndirstond."

Fortager says he will not, as long as the king is alive.

thanne quod Fortager to hem ageyn:
"As longe as the kyng lyveth, jn certeyn, 1756
Neuere non kyng ne schal j be,
nethyr of non thyng to entermeten me."
thanne seiden they to him jn fere:
"jt is vs levere, the kyng ded were." 1760
"3if he were ded," thanne quod he,
"and 3e liked thanne kyng to maken me,
thanne wolde j don my powere

They understand his meaning,

3ow to defende bothe fer & nere." 1764
whanne they vndirstodyn his meneng,
anon from hym they maden departyng,
and tolden here frendis of his answere,
how that Fortager to hem seide there. 1768

and decide to murder the king.

"thanne is it bettere that we þe kyng sle,
and thanne may fortager oure kyng be,
and that be vs kyng he is mad,"
thus ech of hem to othir seid. 1772
and so wile he thanne fulfillen hire wille—
"and to owre cownseyl consentyn vntylle."

Twelve men are chosen for the purpose.

thanne chosen they anon amonges hem alle
be whom this aventure myhte befalle, 1776
So that amonges hem weren there twelfe
that this aventure token on hem-selve.

1741. *not* added above the line. 1759. MS. *hem*.
1760. *ve*, *v* corrected from *l*.

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So forth this xij wenten anon,
and jnto þe kynges halle comen thus son,
and so there with here swerdis so kene
at his Mete here kyng dyden they slene
(and ȝit was there non Man jn the halle tho
That ony word hem dorst speken vnto),
and wenten anon to Fortager,
& tolden hym how they hadden don ther.
thanne Semblawnt of wraththe Fortager gan Make
(but oþerwyse jn his herte he gan it Take),
and thus to hem he seyde tho:
"Evel han ȝe don ȝoure kyng to Slo!
and the Beste Men j wende ȝe hadde been
that jn al this Rewm a man Scholde seen;
& þerfore Riht sore it forthinketh Me
that ony swich thing be ȝow scholde be."
but algates thus was the kyng ded
be thike xij false Mennes Reed.
thanne gonnen they to spekyn hem be-twene
how that Fortager here kyng scholde bene.
At wheche cownceyl weren two goode Men,
that þe tothere tweyne bretheren kepten than,
bothen Awriele and Ek vter,
the kynges bretheren that last was ther.

1780 The conspirers slay the king in his hall.

1784

When they tell Fortager of their deed, he pretends to be angry,

1788

and rebukes them.

1792

However, the people speak of Fortager as the successor to the throne.

1796

1800 At the meeting there are two men present who have the care of Pendragon and Uter.

Whanne these tweyne goode Men vndirstood this,
that Fortager scholde ben kyng, j-wys,
Thanne knewen they that Mater ful Wel,
that be hym this thyng was don Echedel.
Anon token they cownceyl betwixen hem two
what with theke chyldren Myhten they do.
"Sethen that Fortager oure lord hath do slayn,
So wele he these two children, jn certayn.
For anon as that he kyng Js,
Ful Mochel sorwen he wyle werkyn, j-wis.
and we loveden here Fadyr ful wel,
For be hym oure goodes we hadden Moche del;

1804 They understand Fortager's underhand [leaf 95 d] dealings,

1808

and the danger which threatens their wards.

1812

Out of gratitude to the father,

1784. *hem*, *e* through correction.
1800. *tweyne*, *we* damaged (cf. footnote to l. 1737).
1810. *he* added above the line.

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and therfore worthy j-blamed weren we
deseysse to sen be hem Jn ony degre." 1816

they resolve to flee with the children
thanne thus token they here cownseyl,
that they thennes wolde flen saun3 fayl,
and that the children scholde with hem go,
lest that Fortager hem wolde don slo. 1820
"So þat therfore, Siker, avised we be
Forto Fleen jnto a straunge contre,

to Wales.
and towardes wales welen we go,
and ek the children with vs bothe two." 1824
So that they wenten forth here weye,
thike worthy goode men bothe tweye;

The princes grow up in Bourges.
So that jn a cyte dweldyn they thanne
that Boorges was clepid of many a manne; 1828
and there longe j-norsched weren they bothe,
with these goode men, j sey 3ow forsothe.

After Fortager's coronation,
Now thanne scheweth this Storye
how that Fortager kyng was, Sekerlye. 1832
and whanne that Sacrid he was kyng,

the murderers appear before him again.
thanne to hym these Barowns weren comeng,
the same that Slowen kyng costantyn
(therfore hadden they ful evele fyn), 1836
and stoden tofor Fortager vppon a rowe,

He at first pretends not to know them,
& countenaunce he made as he cowde not hem knowe,
& lyk as to-Fore he ne hadde neuere hem seyn;
this cowntenaunce made Fortager, jn certeyn. 1840

then, when they urge the service they have rendered him,
thanne they to hym aproched Neer,
and thus they seide to kyng fortager:
"by vs a kyng J-mad thow were,
& kyng costance we slowen for the here." 1844
and whanne kyng Fortager herde this,

has them arrested,
Anon he leet hem to be taken, j-wis.
[leaf 96 a]
"For ded moste 3e Nedys been,

sentences them to death,
For 3owre owne juggement hauen 3e 3oven clen, 1848
That seyn 3e slowen 3owre owne lord,
3e mosten be ded be 3owre owne word.
j se wel, the same wele 3e don be me,
but j schal 3ow bettere don kepen, Sykerle." 1852

1850. *3e*, MS. *3o*.

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and whanne the xij Barowns herde this,
Ful sore they weren abasched, j-wys.
So that thanne Fortager ryht anon
let hem don drawen everichon,
and to hors hem bond, & so to-drowe,
and thus these xij knyhtes he slowe;
For of hem non pece with othyr lefte,
So that from the Bodyes Jt was refte.

and causes them to be drawn asunder by horses.

thanne these men that distroyed were,
moche worthy kynrede hadden they there.
and to Fortager comen they anon,
and seiden: "mochel schame hast þou vs don,
that thou oure kynrede hast thus slayn
and so veleynowsly to deth hem put, certayn.
For neuere Servise we scholen the do,
for þou oure kynrede thus dydest Slo."
whanne Fortager herde they gonnen hym manace,
anon angry was he jn that place,
and seide, ȝif they Spoken ony more,
the same jewys scholden they han thore.
of wheche wordis they hadden gret dyspyt,
as who that ful lytel dowteden jt,
and seiden to Fortager there anon:
"thow dost vs manacen everichon,
but we don the to vndirstonde:
As longe as we han Frendis oþer Londe,
Gold other Sylver, owther oþer entaylle,
the schal nethyr faillen werre ne bataylle.
and we defyen the what thou kanst do,
For falsly the kyngdom ocupiest thou so,
and Falsly & vntrewely ocupyest the crowne,
with-owten ryht Skele owther resowne.
for wete thow wel, ryht jn good feye,
as evel deth ȝit schalt thou deye."
So that thus, jn this manere degre,
betwixen the kyng & þe barowns began þe melle;
and gret peple asembled vppon a day,
and on Fortager they comen, the sothe to say,

Their relatives expostulate,

and menace the king.

He angrily threatens them with the same fate.

They defy him,

vow vengeance,

rail at his treachery,

and predict for him an evil end.

Thus a feud arises;

1871. MS. *feiden.*
1876. *Manacen, na* on erasure, the *a* corrected from *e*.

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the king sustains heavy losses,

& gret distrocciown diden him there,
and of his token they many presonere.
So that jn this wyse kyng Fortagere
that Lond governede longe there,

but gets the upper hand.

and hem drof owt of the lond
as For a whyle, as j vndirstond.

Whanne owt of þe lond they were drevyn echon,

On account of his cruelty, also his own people rise against him.

Ful spetous to his peple he be-cam anon,
that amonges hem Suffren it myht they not longe,
but azens hym to rysen gonnen they fonge,
and benomen hym gret partye of his lond,
and *with* strenkthes on hym comen, j vndirstond.
whanne that Fortager vndirstood this,
Ful sorweful was he thanne j-wys,
and wende his Lond to hauen forgon.

He then offers reconciliation,

thanne abowten messageris sente he ful son
to alle his Frendis Jn eche contre,
that al abowtes jn his rewm pes forto be.

which is gladly accepted.

and whanne they vndirstooden that pes wolde he,
Ful glad weren they alle, ful sekerle.

[leaf 96 b]

Thanne cam Augwys to Fortager,

During these struggles, he has had the help of a heathen man, Augwis, who now gives him his daughter in marriage. The people strongly object to this.

and hym Servede ful longe ther,
tyl that al his stryf were j-don.
thanne Augwis and Fortager to-gederis spoken son,
and his owne dowhter he 3af hym to wyve,
wherfore his peple wraththed as blyve,
for þat he lefte a part of his creaunce,
benchesown of his wyf, *with*-owte variaunce,
and for that cristened not sche was,
his meynes love lost he jn that plas;
and that wyste wel kyng Fortager.

As danger threatens also from the two exiled princes,

and also of costantynes sones he dredde ther,
whiche that weren jn strawnge contre,
hym wolde owt-seken, ful Sykyrle,
Ful wel he wyste, not for his prow,
as Sykerly as that j telle it 3ow.
thanne thowhte he forto do maken anon

1902. *hym*, *y* corrected from *e*.

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a ful strong towr of lym and ston;
that forto Maken, he dyde it spede,
that he of non Men scholde haue non drede.
thanne sente he abowtes jnto Eche contre
For Masowns and carponteris, ful sekerle,
and hem comanded jn alle Manere
a passyng strong towr to Maken there,
also strong as they cowden ony devyse,
that it were Mad after here Gyse,
and anon let ordeynen ston & Morter
this forsaid towr to be-gynnen ther.
and whanne this werk was thus begonne,
& the heythe of fowre Roddis vpe was j-Ronne
aboven the Erthe be here werkyng,
but aftyrwardis fil there a wondyr thing:
al that they wrowhten be the day,
be Nyht it was ouerthrowen, jn fay,
and be qwakyng of theke Mowntayn,
there as they wrowhten, jn certayn.
whanne that Fortager beheld al this,
that his werk ne wolde not lasten, j-wis,
thanne was he bothe jn sorwe and care,
til þat he knew why it so gan fare.
thanne sent he abowtes jn al the lond
aftyr alle the wysest, as j vndirstond.
and whanne they weren asemblyd Everychon,
To hem he Schewede this Merveille anon.
and thanne answerid they anon:
"Sykerly, Syre, this connen we not don!
Ful worthi clerkis they Mosten be,
for here-vppon they connen bet than we."
thanne seide Fortager to hem ful snelle:
"j trowe the sothe that ȝe me telle."
Anon Messengeris gonnen gon welfaste
aftyr þe wisest clerkis anon jn haste
that myhte ben fownde jn al his lond,
as j do ȝow to vndirstond,
and tolde hem of that wondyr thing,

1928 Fortager resolves to build a strong tower, where he can be safe.
Workmen are sent for,
1932
1936
building materials are brought,
and the work is begun.
1940
1944 But what is built in the day, topples down in the night.
Fortager, greatly troubled,
1948
sends for the wisest men in the country.
1952
1956 These advise him to call in the aid of men of learning.
1960
So he does,
1964
states the case before them,

1961. *welfaſte*, *l* corrected from *ſ*.

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of his towr and of the Fallyng.
thanne of the wisest clerkes took he anon,
and jnto cownseyl gonne they gon,
and axede hem, 3if they knewen ony Reswon,
why that his werk fyl so a-down.
"For, sekerly, it is j-told To Me
that but be 3ow wyst it may not be."
They reply that only [leaf 96 c] astrologers can clear up the matter.
thanne answerid they hym jn here Manere
That of sweche Craft knew they not there.
"but Somme clerkys here amongis vs ben
that of Astronomye konnen, as j wen."
thanne quod fortager: "Enqweryth 3e
whiche of 3oure felesche[pe] that jt be."
It is at first found out that there are two astrologers amongst them,
thanne Ech of hem axeden oþer there
whiche of that craft konneng were.
thanne of that compenye weren there tweyne
that of that craft cowden, certeyne,
as Mochel as ony men lyveng;
thus was jt Reported to the kyng.
eventually seven come forward.
that so the clerkes Emparled Jn fere,
that atte laste of hem sevene there were,
These, when brought before the king,
and they weren lad anon to-fore the kyng
Forto tellen hym the aventure of this thing.
thanne axede hem the kyng anon
3if owht of that craft cowde they don,
and why that his Towr ne Myhte not stonde,
hym forto telle that, myhten [they] fonde.
boldly undertake to settle the question,
and they seiden that they cowden wel
of that cas tellen hym Every del.
and are promised great rewards.
thanne swoor the kyng, so god hym save,
they scholde han what good that they wolde have.
thanne departyd this cownseille anon
of these clerkis there Everychon.
They remain,
and theke same sevene beleften there stylle
The kynges Talent there to fulfille,
Forto schewen there here konneng,
alle the cause of the Towris fallyng.

1969. MS. *axedš*. 1978. MS. *felsche*; cf. ll. 1628, 2440.
1992. MS. *hym forto that myhtš fonde* with *telle* added above the line. 1994. MS. *hem*.

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These clerkis gonnen to stodyen welsore, — set to work,
and ech of hem there provede his lore;
So that the more they stodyed, þe forthere they were. — and get on fairly,
thaune cam the kyng and axede hem there,
how that j-scholde stondyn of his thyng.
And as 3it thanne cowden they tellen him non tydyng, — but do not arrive at a definite conclusion.
but axeden hym viij dayes of respyt. — They then obtain a respite of eight days.
thanne quod the kyng: "wel me lykyth Jt,
but loke that 3e otterly be that day
of my towr the sothe that 3e me say."
Thanne wenten they to here cownseil ageyn, — After fresh endeavours,
and eche of hem gan to oþer seyn:
"what scholen wee werkyn jn this thing
hit Forto Bryngen to a good endyng?"
thanne bespak on of the Sevene there:
"let eche be hym-Selve his wyt schewen here, — each working by himself,
how that jt Semeth hym of this cas,
let hym here Schewen jt jn this plas."
and eche there schewede his verdit sone,
So that alle they acordid jnto one, — they all agree that they have not found out the cause of the falling of the tower, but that they, instead, have seen in the stars another wonder:
Sawf that of the towr knew they non thyng
what was the cause of the Fallyng.
But on gret merveille there they sye,
where-offen alle, ful trewelye,
Ful sore abasched alle they were,
For that merveille that they syen there,
that a child jn this erthe j-boren was — a fatherless child has been born on earth.
whiche erthly Fadir hadde neuere jn non plas.
thanne eche of hem to othir gan say:
"Let vs ben avised be the morwe of þe day."

Thanne vppon the morwe they sembled Eft sone,
and jnto on thing they acordid Echone:
So that of this child that there was bore, — To have this child killed,
how that his lyf Scholde be forlore, — and its blood put into the foundation of the tower—
And his blood j-leyd jn the fundement — [leaf 96 *d*]
Of that jlke towr, verament,
3if that towr scholde Evere abyde.

2014. *gan*, *g* through correction. 2025. *sye*, *y* corrected from *e*.
2030. *whiche*, *e* stuck on to the preceding *h*.

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thus they seyden that jlke tyde,
Everich a mayster be hym-self alone,
and thus alle acordid they jn-to one.
"and lete vs Maken the kyng thus beleve,
oþer ellis of oure lyves he wyle vs depreve;
and that theke child he do seken anon,
also faste as Messengeris Mown gon."
thanne thus Endid they here cownseil there,
that anon so to-forn þe kyng j-browht they were,
and Eche be hym-self tolde his avis
aforn the kyng there and alle his.
thanne, whanne the kyng and alle his cownsaylle
herden hem thus tellen, with-owten faylle,
and seiden alle: "it Myhte wel be,
Swich a thing, Jn alle degre,
3if so it be that a man be bore
with-owten Erthly fadyr, as 3e seiden before;
and thus han 3e me told Everyechone,
Ech of 3ow Maistres be 3owre one."
"and but 3e it Fynde as we 3ow say,
Ellis doth be vs what 3ow lyst, jnfay!"
thanne seyde the kyng to hem ageyn,
he wolde hem jn warde putten, certeyn,
Tyl that the sothe he Myhte knowe.
thanne seiden they to hym vppon a rowe:
"Anon as that he Fownden Js, þat child so 3yng,
Loketh that 3e don hym Slen for ony thyng,
and that the blood be to 3ow browht,
and for non thyng they leven jt nowht."
the kyng hem putte alle sevene anon
Jn a ful strong hows of lym and ston,
and deliuered hem jn what hem Nede was,
therby to ben Sosteyned jn that plas.
Thanne ordeyned the kyng Messengeris ful snelle,
xij worthy gentyles, as j 3ow telle,
that they scholden alle anon forth gon
this Fadirles child to seken welson.
and these xij Men the kyng Made swere,

that is what they resolve to advise the king,
in order to hide their ignorance and save their own lives.
The king and his council deem the remedy acceptable.
After the astrologers have repeated their assertion,
and given instructions as to the bringing of the child's blood,
they are locked up in a tower, pending the issue.
Twelve messengers are sent out in search of Merlin;
they must swear

2051. *Cownfaylle*, *a* corrected from *e*.

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that where so Evere j-fownden he were,
that they scholden hym Slen anon—
"and that his Blood jn a sawf place ȝe don,
and that it Sawfly be browht to Me,
thowgh two ȝer owte that ȝe be.
and loke that ȝe fynden hym for ony thing,
thowgh that ȝe Maken the lengere taryeng."
and thus the Messengeris, forth they gon,
be tweyne & tweyne here weye token they son,
and sowhten jn Manye dyvers contre
that child to fynde, ȝif hit myhte be.
So that atte laste fowre Metten jn fere,
as that here aventure behappede there.

to kill him wherever they find him.

They search, two and two together, in divers countries.

Two of these pairs accidentally fall in with each other,

Thus Ryden these fowre Jn compenye,
tyl vppon a day jt happede, ful trewelye,
Thorwh a fayr Medewe as they gonne Ryde,
weren Many children pleyeng jn that tyde.
and Merlyne, that knew alle thencheson
of tho Messengeris comeng so son,
and wiste ful wel that they him sowghte,
anon to a Riche Mannes sone he Rawhte.
For he wiste ful wel that he wolde wroth be,
ȝif that he hym smete, fulle Sykerle;
Thanne lefte He vpe His staf Anon
and overthwert the Schenys smot him thus son.
Anon this child be-gan to crye
with a lowd voys ful angerlye,
and there Reprovyd this Merlyne,
and clepid him "fowle false fowndelyne,
that Nevere Fadyr haddest thow here,
thou fowle fowndelyng, thou fals bismere."
and whanne þe messengeris herden of this,
Towardis that child they drowen, j-wys,
and hym axede jn here Manere
what he was that hym so smot þere.
thanne answerid the child anon ageyn:
"Jt is a wommans sone here, jn certeyn,
that wot neuere ho that the Fadyr was,
Nethir ho that him begat, jn non plas."

and one day ride together through a meadow,

where some children are at play. Merlin is one of them. Knowing the errand of the messengers, he on purpose strikes a playfellow:

[leaf 97 a]

the latter begins to cry,

and calls him a nasty foundling.

The messengers' attention is roused,

they question the struck child,

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and Merlin himself steps forward and tells them that he is the one they seek.

whanne Merlyne herde that he seide so,
Towardis hem faste he gan to go,
and spak to hem with a lawheng chere:
"j am he whom that ȝe seken here,
And also hos deth that ȝe han swore;
lo, here j stonde now ȝow before!
For that my blood with ȝow scholde ȝe bere
To kyng Fortager jn alle Manere."

The messengers are surprised,

and whanne that the messengeris herden hym seyn so,
anon thanne alle abasched weren they tho,
and so tolden hym it was, ful certeynle.
"ȝe, that wiste j ful wel longe er ȝe."

and say he must go with them.

thanne seide the Messengeris to hym ageyn:
"with vs Mostest thou gon, Jn certeyn."

He replies that he will gladly do so, if they promise not to kill him.

"that ful gladliche wyl j now do,
ȝif it so be that ȝe not me Slo."
but ȝit Merlyn wiste Ful wel
þat þerto talent hadden they Neuere a del.
but Merlyne Seyde this be Enchesown
To wyten what they wolden seyn anon,
and seide to hem: "ȝif that ȝe wilen grawnten Me
that ȝe welen neither me distroyen ne sle,

He will also tell why the tower cannot stand.

with ȝow wile j gon forto Fonde
and telle why that þe towr ne may not stonde."
& whanne they herden the child tho speken this,

Still more surprised, they agree rather to be forsworn than slay such a child.

thanne mochel more abasched weren they, j-wys,
and seiden that—"this child wondris doth speke;
Jt were pyte on hym to ben awreke."
So that Eche to othyr gan forto seyn:
"Rathere forsworn scholen we ben, jn certeyn,
thanne jn ony wyse hym Scholde we Sle,
Sekyrly, for vs Jt Schal not now be."

Merlin invites them to stay at his mother's and Holy Blasy's place.

"Sires," quod Merlyne, "with me scholen ȝe go,
and ȝowre herberwe j schal bryngen ȝow vnto,
and loggen jn place there as my Modyr js,
& also anothir good Man, with-owten Mys;
For with-owten here leve j ne may not go,
Certein, Sires, J sey ȝow vnto."

2150. *ȝowr'*, *r'* squeezed in afterwards.

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Thanne answeryd these Messengeris ageyn : They accept the invitation,
"With the to gon we ben ful fayn
jnto what place thow wylt vs lede ;
with the scholen we go *with*-owt*en* drede."
So wenten they with *Mer*lyn jnto that plas,
jnto a no*n*nerye, there his Modyr was,
and *Mer*lyne chargede that Meyne Echon and Merlin provides good cheer.
Ful good chere the Messengeris to don.

Anon as that of here hors they were*n* lyht adown,
To-forn Blasye he dyde hem come*n* anon. In front of Blasy, he gives a full account
"Lo, Sire," quod Merlyne to Blasye tho,
"behold here tho Men that me seken to slo.
And j 3ow preye, sires, now alle jn fere
That trewe Witnesse 3e Welen beren me Here [leaf 97 b]
To-forn this goodman that here Js,
3if that j lye owther sey owht amys.
haue j not Told 3ow the cause why of the facts :
that 3e me come*n* to seken, verrayly ?"
and they seiden : "3is, ful Sykerle !"
of wheche they wondrid how it myhte be.
thanne seide *Mer*lyn to Blayse there :
"now vndirstondith what j schal sein here."
To the Messengeris thanne seide he tho :
"Kyng Fortager now come*n* 3e fro, king Fortager's tower,
whiche kyng, a gret towr doth he Make
onliche for strengthe for his owne sake,
the wheche towr ne May not stonde its falling,
For non werkyng of Mannes honde,
but that jn an owr down doth it go,
as mochel as they Maken jn a Mounthe o*per* two.
wherfore that the kyng, ful wroth he js,
and aftyr his clergyse hath sent, J-wys, the consultation of the astrologers,
but of this non Resown conne they telle,
of that towr, why that it Felle ;
Ne non othir thyng ne cowde*n* they se,
but that a child born scholde there be
that hadde non Erthly fadyr here.
and vppon this they acordid jn fere, their advice,
that swich a child they scholden sle,
and the blood to-forn hym j-browht to be,

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to leyn that blood jn the fundement,
thanne scholde the towr stondyn, verament.
and whanne that þe kyng herde of this,
the king's surprise, thanne merveillede he mochel here-offen, j-wys.
and so the clerkis comanded him anon
that Nedis this thing scholde be don.
and anon as they me Fownde,
they scholden slen me that jlke stownde,
and my blood forth with hem bere
to kyng Fortager, tyl they comen there,
and don tempre my blood with that mortere;
thanne seiden [they] the towr scholde stondyn there.
the sending of the twelve sworn messengers, Anon kyng fortager thorwh here Red
Sente xij Messengeris jn-to Every sted,
of wheche xij these fowre now be
that hider ben comen forto seken me.
but ferst alle xij he Mad hem to swere,
vppon here Sewraunce, to-forn him there,
that be ony weye they scholden me sle
the ferste tyme they myhten me Se.
the meeting in the meadow, and as thorwgh the Medewe they gonne Ryde
where as Manye children pleyden that tyde,
j knew ful wel here cause anon,
and the incident with the playmate. and to þe beste of hem alle j gan to to gon,
and him there smot j wondyr sore,
For that j wyste ful wel before
that the werste he wolde sein be me
that he cowde onne thinken jn ony degre.
and that dede j for non othyr thing,
but for these men of me scholden hauen knoweng.
Now, Maister Blayse," quod merlyne, "j preye the,
So axe now of hem ȝif this trewe be."
The messengers confirm his words, "Now certes, Maister," quod the Messengeris, "j-wis,
Ryht as he seith, forsothe now it Js.
as God vs brynge jnto owre contre,
Jt is ful trewe that he telleth the."
Blasy praises his wisdom, "Now certes," quod this Maister thanne,
"& he mot lyve, he wil ben a wys Manne,

2206. MS. *feiden the.* 2208. MS. *Sentȝ; to* added above the line.

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and therfore pite it were hym to qwelle
Forsothe, Lordynges, as J ȝow telle."
thanne quod these Messengeris: "certeinle,
For vs, be owre Sewraunce, schal he nevere ded be,
For we hadden moche more levere that owre kyng
dysherite vs of al owre worldly thyng.
For ful wel knoweth he that wot al this,
that talent therto haven we non, j-wis."

and the messengers [leaf 97 c] renew their promise not to kill him.

Thanne this Blayse clepid *Mer*lyne anon
hym for to axen of a prevy qwestion,
and axede of Merlyne ful prevyle
ȝif they hadden ony wyl hym for to sle.
and Merlyn gan to Lawhen & seide: "Nay,
Ful wel here wylle j knowe, jn fay,
for ȝe scholen comen and ȝoure-self here
of here Sewraunce Jn alle Manere."
Now quod *Mer*lyne: "J schal with ȝow go,
ȝif that ȝe welen Enswren me vnto
that ȝe scholen me bryngen to-fore þe kyng
with-owten ony harm oþer bodyly hyndryng,
and that non harm be don to Me,
tyl that j haue hym bothe spoken & se."
So that to hym Maden they here Surawnce
him there to bryngen with-owten Nosawnce.

Blasy, still uneasy on this point, is reassured by Merlin, who lets him hear, once more, the asseveration of the messengers.

"Now Se j," quod Blayse to hym anone,
"That thou wilt me beleven here alone.
Now telle thou me thanne what j schal do
of this Book that j have be-gonnen so."
"that schal j the telle," quod *Mer*lyne anon,
"Er that j from the owt this place wil gon.
vndirstondist thou not wel this,
that God to me hath sent, j-wys,
bothe wyt, Mynde, and Memorye
alle manere of thinges to discrye,
More thanne to ony Erthliche Man?
this thow supposyst that J kan.
So that they that me supposid to have,

Blasy, seeing that Merlin is to leave him, asks what to do with the book begun.

Merlin replies:

"God has endowed me with special powers,

2238. *dy/herite*, *f* inserted afterwards.
2266. The line was omitted and then written up the margin.

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han me forlost, and god wyl me save,
and chosen me for His service. and me hath chosen to his Servise,
Swich forto don as j kan devyse,
that non man neþer kan don but J,
J seye 3ow, maister, ful trewely.
Therefore I must go with these men to their country and disclose great things. and therefore me behoueth to go
thedyr as these men comen fro
jnto this contre to seken me here;
with hem wyle j forth gon jn fere.
and there schal J so moche thing seyn,
that þe peple jn me schal beleven, pleyn,
and holden me for the wisest man one
that on erthe Js except god alone.
Thou shalt come thither later on; and thider schalt þou come and þere fulfylle
The werk that j to þe spak of vntylle.
but with me thedyr schalt thou not gone,
but aftyr thedir schal thow comen alone,
but now thou shalt go to Northumberland. and axen jnto Northhumberland,
þe whiche is a wilde contre, þou vndirstand.
and þere schalt þow knowelichyng haue
þere forto dwellen and þere to be save.
There I will visit thee and help thee on with thy work. and thider schal j comen to the
and the Schewen many diuers secre,
& also bryngen to the alle maner of thyng
That behoueth to thy werkyng.
Thy reward shall be great, and ful wel alowed schalt thou be
For thy Travaille, ful Sykerle:
jn this world, joye to thy lyf,
and aftir, endles blisse with-owten stryf.
and thy book shall be ever loved. and as longe as jn this world here
that ony man lyveth jn goddis manere,
that werk evere beloved schal be
and be herd of the peple ful hertyle.
As for my own great labour, it will begin only in the time of the fourth king, [leaf 97 d] and weteth wel that my gret travaylle
begynneth not 3it, with-owten Faylle,
Ne not ne schal jn non wyse,
Tyl that come the fowrthe kyng, a man of pryse.
and jn his tyme myn travaylle Schal be,

2286. *thow*, corrected from *they*.

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also the aventures of gret Breteygne, sykirle;
hos Name schal ben kyng Arthowr,
a ful worthy kyng and of gret hono*ur*.
thanne schalt thou comen jnto that contre
of whiche that ferst [j] told of the.
and thedyr to the schal J fonge
Ful often-tymes, Evere amonge,
the forto Maken to vndyrstonde
alle thynges that ben don jn breteygne londe,
and Ek that after scholen befalle,
Jn thy book to putten hem alle.
For wete thow wel, Jn certeyn,
Mochel more schal it be herd, & more pleyn.
For there ne schal nothing jn this lond be,
Nethir litel ne Mochel, jn no*n* degre,
Nethir don ne wrowht jn non Manere,
That to thy book *pro*fitable were,
anon jn thy Book it schal be do,
For knowen schal it be for Evere Mo.
and the Name of thy Bok schal be
J-clepyd seint Graal, ful Sykirle."
and thus Mer*l*yne to his Maister spak there,
and hym thus tolde jn dyvers Manere
what Mane*r* of thing that he scholde do,
Ere that he diparted his Maister fro.
and "Maister" he clepid him for this Manere,
For Maister to his Modir he was Everywhere.
whanne Blayse w*ith* Mer*l*yn thus hadde j-spoken,
Thanne was his herte jn joye be-loken,
and to Mer*l*yne he seide anon tho:
"what so thou comandest me to do,
and j Mowe it don jn ony degre,
J schal it don, ful sekerle."

Thanne anon Mer*l*yne tornede ageyn
To the Messengeres his weye, ful pleyn,
and seide that he wolde nedes go
his leve of his Modir to taken tho.

whose name shall be Arthur.

Then thou shalt come into the same country,

and I will tell all things about Britain,

both small and great,

for thee to put into thy book,

which shall be called St. Graal."

Thus Merlin takes leave of his master—

so he calls him for his mother's sake—

and Blasy is happy

and resigned.

After this, Merlin with the messengers

2312. MS. *ferſt told.* 2337. *he* added above the line.

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goes to take leave of his mother.
Thanne ledde he these Messengeris forth anon,
and to his Modir gonne they gon.

He says that he himself must depart,
" Swete Modyr, j telle now the,
here ben comen men from fer contre
and of strange place to seken me here,
wherfore with hem moste j go jn alle Manere.
therfore j come my leve to take,
that non Morneng for me ȝe Make;

in fulfilment of God's will,
and forto fulfille goddis Servyse
Thider Most j gon jn alle wyse.
For j ne may not his wyl fulfylle,
Tyl jnto that Lond j come vntylle,
whedir so Evere he wil me lede
there his wille forto spede.

and that Blaise must go also.
and Blaise, that is ȝoure Maister dere,
thedyr schal comen also jn fere;
So that bothen vs tweyne moste ȝe forgon,
and for vs here behoveth ȝow to dwellen alon."

The mother commends him to God,
thanne seide to hym his Modir agein:
" sethen it May non oþer ben, jn certeyn,
j comande ȝow to God al-Myht,
For it is Nethyr jn My power ne Myht
ȝow with-holden aȝens ȝoure wille,
what that Evere j seye ȝow vntylle.

and only wishes Blasy could stay.
But siker, sone, and ȝoure willes be,
j wolde that Blayse schold leven with Me."
" Forsothe, Modir, he ne May not So,

[leaf 98 a]
For Nedylynges thedyr Moste He go."

Merlin and Blasy depart in different directions.
And thus Merlyne of his Modir took cownge,
and forth with the Messengeris wente, ful sikerle.
& Blayse wente forthe jnto Northhumberlond,
lyk as Merlyn dyde hym to vndirstond.

Merlin and the four messengers, on their road, overtake a churl who has bought a pair of strong shoes
Merlyne and these Messengeris Jn fere,
alle forth to-gederis Riden they there.
So that thorwgh a town gonnen they Ryde,
where as Market was the same tyde.
& whanne the town they were past Everychon,
a cherl to-For hem Syen they gon,
that him hadde j-bowht a peire stronge schon,

and ek strong clowt lethir to sette þere-on.
and whanne that Merlyne this cherl gan se,
he gan anon to lawghen ful prevyle.
thanne axeden hym the Messengeris there
why he lawghed, & wherfore it were.
"Sires, j lawghe," quod Merlyne thanne,
"at hym that 3ondir goth, 3one cherlisch Manne,
that hym bowht ful stronge schon
and Ek stronge clowtes to setten þer-on.
And j 3ow seye, ful certeynly,
that he schal dyen ful sodeynly,
Er that he come to his owne place;
Swich schal ben both his hape & his grace."
and whanne they herden hym, that he seide so,
Ful Mochel Merveyl hadden they tho.
thanne seiden they that fayn they wolde knowe
3if it scholde happen with-jnne a throwe.
and so that tweyne folweden that jlke veleyn,
and tweyne with Merlyne Ryden, certeyn.
they folwed not this cherl passyng a Myle,
that he ne was ded with-jnne a whyle,
and Evene a-Myddes the hye weye,
there gan this veleyn forto deye.
and his schon vndir his arm were,
and Ek his clowt lethir also there.
Anon as they hadden seyn this syht,
To here felawes they wenten with al here Myht,
and tolden hem of that they hadden seyn,
and howh that þe veleyn to-forn hem gan deyen.
"Now certes," quod these Messengeris a3en,
"alle theke clerkis, but Folys they been,
that wolde don vs this wyse Man to sle,
but for non thing jt ne schal not be.
For on myn owne Body levere hadde j here
To suffren gret peynes jn dyvers Manere,
thanne his body ony harm scholde haue,
also god Me wysse other Save!"
and so they seiden Everychon,
alle that with hym gonne forto gon.
thanne thankid they hym al jnfere,

2384 and leather to mend them with.

Merlin laughs quietly.

When asked for the

2388 reason,

2392

he says the man will die before reaching his home.

2396

2400

Two of the men ride after the rustic,

2404 and see him expire on the road.

2408

They return to their comrades, and tell what

2412 they have seen.

These blame the astrologers, who have desired such a wise person's

2416 death;

2420

they thank Merlin.

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of that Merveille he told hem there.

The messengers are amazed at Merlin knowing whatever they speak or do.

and sore a-basched weren they Echon,
For they cowden non thing nethir speken ne don,
but that he knew alle here entent;
thus thanne seiden they, verament.

Proceeding on their journey.

Forth thanne Riden they in here jorne,
Tyl that jn Fortageris lond they be,
and with-jnnen his strengthe and his powere,
alle the iiij Messengeris and Merlyne jn fere.
So that Jt happede vppon a day,

[leaf 96 b]

As thorwgh A town thanne lay here Way,

they see a child being carried to the grave.

A chyld to-ward Beryeng was there j-bore,
and Moche ful sore wepyng was there-fore.
the prestes and clerkis, ful faste they songe,
as lowde as they myhten with here tonge.

Merlin laughs.

thanne gan this Merlyn to lawghen anon,
as he with his Feleschepe gan forth to gon,
and seide to his felawes: "Merveilles J se."
"Now, goode child," quod they, "what Mown tho be?"

He points to the man weeping behind the bier,

"Se ȝe not," quod Merlyn, "now here
this goode Man that Folweth the bere,
that so sore wepeth and Maketh swich doel?"
"ȝis, sekyr," quod they, "we sen hym wel."

and to the priest singing in front.

"and se ȝe not the preest that goth to-fore,
That so Meryly now syngeth thore?"
"ȝis, child, that don we, ful Sykirly."

The priest ought to weep, says Merlin, for the child is the priest's.

"ȝe, the Sorwe scholde he Maken, trewly,
For, be Myn hevyd, the child is his,
and non thyng his that folweth, j-wys;
& therfore the Sorwe the preest scholde Make
that the goodman doth For the childis sake."
"what, trowen ȝe [not] that the child his be?"
"Nay, Sires," quod Merlyne, "ful Sykirle."
"Leve child, how Mowen we the sothe knowe?"

He tells his companions how to ascertain the truth.

"Goth forth," quod Merlyne, "on a rowe,
and axeth the Modyr the cause why
why that hire husbond wepeth so soryly.
Anon wele sche sein it is for his chyld,
that to hym was bothe Mek and Myld.

2455. MS. *ȝe that.*

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and loke that ȝe answeren hire ageyn
that it was neuere his, Jn certeyn,
but that the prestes child it Js
That to-forn goth and syngeth, J-wys."

Forth thanne wente the Messengeris anon,
and to this womman there gonnen they gon,
& token hire on syde Evene ryht there,
aposynge hire thus jn this Manere;
Every word, Ryht as Merlyne bad,
anon to this womman there they sayd.
and whanne this womman herde this,
Ful sore abasched sche was, j-wys,
and to hem seide Jn this Manere:
"Me thynketh, to ȝow may j not lyen here,
For trewly, as ȝe seyn now, it Js,
j May not the contrarye seyn, j-wys.
but lordynges, j preye ȝow for charite
that to My lord Ne discureth not Me,
For owther he wolde me slen anon,
owther owt of his compenye j scholde be don."
and whanne they knewen that it was so,
ayen to Merlyne gonnen they to go,
and thankyde hym of his Talkyng,
of whiche they hadden gret Merveyllyng.
and so jn here jorne gonnen they Ryde,
Towardis kyng Fortager þat same tyde.
and whanne they comen there the kyng was,
thanne seiden tweyne of hem jn that plas,
and spoken to Merlyne j[n] the plyht,
that to the kyng wolden they gon ful Ryht,
and tellen hym what they han fownde.
thanne preyden they Merlyne that jlke stownde
hem forto cownseillen, what they scholde say,
lest they weren blamed Jn ony way,
For be-cawse they hadden hym not slayn,
as they weren comawnded, jn certayn.
"For, be aventure, we scholen ben schent,
that we ne hadden þe slayn, verament."

The messengers go to the woman,

and say to her the same as Merlin has told them.

The woman confesses her guilt,

and implores their discretion.

The messengers thank Merlin.

On arriving home, two of the messengers are to give report to the king.

They ask Merlin's advice.

2491. MS. *j the.*

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[leaf 98 c]

Merlin instructs the messengers

"Now, leve Sires," quod Merlyne thanne,
"and ȝe wil don as J schal ȝow kenne,
J-blamed scholen ȝe neuere be
Jn non Manere wise, Sires, for Me.
Anon to kyng Fortager faste scholen ȝe go,

what to relate to King Fortager,

and jn this wyse that ȝe seyne hym vnto:
lik as that ȝe haven Me j-fownde,
and that j kan hym tellen with-jnne a stownde
why that his towr ne May not stonde;
and that wile j ful sone taken on honde,

and what to demand of him.

on covenaunt the clerkis he wil Slen,
lik as they desireden J scholde haue ben.
For telleth hym that j knowe the cause why
wherfore they wolden me don slen, trewly.
and whanne ȝe haven told hym al this,
loketh his byddyng ȝe don with-owten Mys."

The messengers repair to the king,

thus departyd the Messengeris from hym, trewelye,
and to kyng Fortager anon comen they jn hye.
whanne that kyng Fortager gan hem beholde,
Ful joyeful he was Jn Many Folde,
and axede of hem how they hadden sped
of thike arende that he on hem leyd.

and describe how they have found Merlin.

"Sire," quod these Messengeris, "so as we Myhte,
we scholen ȝow it tellen anon Ryhte."
thanne took hem the kyng Jn cownseyl anon,
and they hym tolde there Ryht son
how that they hadden Merlyne j-fownde,
jn what Manere, and with-jnne what stownde.
"and but ȝif it hadde ben his owne wille,
we cowde Nevere hauen comen hym vntylle."

The king asks who this Merlin is.

thanne seide the kyng to hem Ryht tho:
"what is thike Merlyne þat ȝe speken of so?
j bad ȝow seken, ful plenerlye,
a Fadirles child, ful vtterlye,
that was neuere begeten of Erthly Man;
of this Mater telleth me, as ȝe kan!
and þerto the blood of hym Me brynge,
this was ȝoure charge, with-owten lesynge."

They say, he is that fatherless child,

"Sire, this same Merlyne Js he
of whom that ȝe speken, ful sykirle.

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and therto the wisest man he is one
þat ever was born, except God alone. — and the wisest of mortals,
and that oth that 3e maden vs swere,
we han it fulfyld, as 3e now here."
and 3it the messengeris tolden him more,
that his clerkis cowden non skele thore
him forto tellen the cawse why
that his towr myhte not stonden, trewely.
"but anon apertly he wil 3ow telle — able to tell why the tower falls,
why the cause 3oure towr doth falle.
and þerfore he vs hyder to the sente
Forto knowen of 3oure entente.
3if that 3e wolden owht with hym speke,
thanne wolde he to 3ow his herte Breke;
and of othir merveilles he wyl 3ow say, — and other marvels besides.
what aftyr schal be-fallen many a day.
and 3if 3e welen, we scholen hym Sle,
For tweyne felawes of owre with him be."
"Nay," quod the kyng, "and it be so, — The king is highly satisfied.
that he cowde syker tellen me vnto
the cause of my towris Fallyng,
thanne wolde j that 3e hym slowen for non thing.
and 3if he conne me tellen, certeynle,
and that 3e bryngen hym to me."

Thussone these messengeris gonne to gon, — The messengers return to Merlin,
and the kyng aftyr hem prekede anon.
Anon Whanne merlyne Sawgh that messenger, — [leaf 98 d]
to hem Spak he anon Ryht ther:
"3owre trowthe to me haven 3e now plyht
me not to deren be day ne be nyht."
"thou seist ful trewe," quothen they anon, — and tell him that he is safe.
"For vs, certein, harm getyst thou non,
For we hadden levere be aventure to deye
thanne the forto slen, certeinlye."
"J schal 3ow tellen," quod merlyne, "everydel,

2541. MS. *therto of the wiſest Man*, the preposition being added above the line. Cf. Notes.
2544. *we han* corrected from *whan*, the *e* being added above the line.

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how that ȝoure trowthe ȝe scholen save*n* Ryht wel." 2576

Merlin rides to meet the king,

Thus with Merlyne Ryden they forth Jn fere,
Tyl that with kyng Fortager Metten they there.
and anon as Evere Merlyne hym Say,
streyth to the kyng he took his way, 2580
and seide: "sire kyng, ful wel thou be!
A word jn cownseil wolde j speken with the."

takes him and the messengers aside,

Anon took he there the kyng on syde,
and ek clepede the Messengeres at þat tyde 2584
That hym forto seken j-charged were
the sothe of hym forto Enqwere.
"why that the Towr stonden ne Myhte,
j schal the tellen, Syre, anon Ryhte, 2588

tells up the astrologers' malign advice,

and how þat thow comandedest me to sle
Be the cownseil of clerkys that false be,
and my blood al forto take
and þer-with thy Morteer for to Make. 2592
but ȝit they Fayllen of here art,
for of that konnenge hauen they non part.

demands that the astrologers shall be punished,

but sire kyng, and þou wilt Enswren me here
the same Jewyse to don jn alle Manere 2596
vppon hem as thou wost hauen don be Me,
J schal the tellen, ful sykerle,
the cause why þat thy towr doth falle,
so openly, that ȝe scholen knowen it alle, 2600

and undertakes, on that condition, to make the tower stand.

and declaren openly alle ȝow be-Fore
how þat it schal lasten for Euere More.
ȝif thou wylt don as j the say,
telle me now, sire kyng, owther ȝe oþer Nay." 2604
thanne answered the kyng ageyn:
"ȝif þou do as that þou seist, jn certeyn,

The king complies.

the same jewise scholen they have
as þou scholdest han had, so god me save." 2608
"Go we, sire, thanne," quod Merlyne tho,
"thedir that thy towr þou begynnest so,
and thike same clerkis brynge with the,
thanne there the sothe Mihtest þou se, 2612
ȝif they connen owht seyn, amonges hem alle,

2608. *ſcholdeſt*; the first vowel is apparently an *a*.

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whi that thy towr doth so down falle."
so wenten they forth alle jn fere,
and the clerkis sent aftyr were
to thike there as the towr was dyht;
thedyr comen they alle anon ryht.

They all go to the tower.

And whanne they weren assembled Everichon,
Merlyne hem thanne aposede anon,
and axede on of the wysest clerkes
why that so fyl adown the kynges werkes.
thanne answerede this clerk him ageyn:
"we ne connen not it tellen, jn certeyn,
but the kyng we tolden jn what degre
wherby his werk Sosteyned scholde be."
"3e," quod the kyng to the clerkis thanne,
"3e boden me don seken aftyr swich a manne
that Neuere erthly Fadyr hadde,
and hym don Slen, thus 3e me badde.
and Swich a man j Not where to fynde,
For me Wolde thenken Jt Were Al a3ens kynde."
and thanne bespak there Merlyne anon,
and seide to tho clerkis Everychon:
"Lordynges, a fool that 3e wolden Maken the kyng,
To don hym to seken so wondirful a thyng:
a man that Neuere erthly Fadyr hadde,
jnto this world be born and forth bradde.
but 3e non thyng ne dyden Jt for his prow,
but what the cause was, j schal tellen yt 3ow:
For wel 3e wysten that 3e scholden deye,
but 3if that the trowthe 3e tolden, jn feye.
and for that 3e cowden non othirwyse do,
therefore 3e boden hym Swich a man to slo,
and the Blood of hym al forto take,
the wheche his Towr stonden Scholde Make.
and thus thowghten 3e that Man to don sle,
3oure-self to askapen, 3if it myhte be."
and whanne they herden the chyld thus seyn,
Ful sore abasched weren they, certeyn,

There Merlin asks the astrologers if they can explain its falling.

They say: "No,

but we have told the king a remedy."

[leaf 99 *a*]

Merlin replies:

"You deluded the king,

for you feared his anger at your ignorance."

The astrologers are confounded.

2640. *yt* added above the line, *y* blurred.

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and wisten wel thanne forsothe anon
that deyen scholden they Everychon.
Merlin continues: "behold, Sire kyng," quod Merlyne tho,
"Now sen here ȝe how this doth go,
the astrologers' object was not to make the tower stand, but to rid themselves of him. that these clerkys ne wilen not me don sle,
with My blood ȝowre towr j-Mad to be,
but that amonges hem loot is þere Cast
that for me they Mosten deyen Jn hast.
and now axeth hem ȝif it be not so,
for sekyr, how so the game now go,
Non of hem js here so hardye
jn My precense to Maken ony lye.
"Seyth he soth?" quod the kyng anon.
The astrologers confess, "ȝe, Sykerly," quod the clerkys Everychon,
"But we connen not weten, jn Non degre,
how that al this thyng knowen scholde he.
and ask to be spared long enough to see the tower made to stand. Sire, we ȝow preyen as oure Soverein lord,
alle we ȝoure clerkes, be on acord,
that owre lyves ȝe wolden graunten vs here,
tyl that the Sothe we Myhten sen jn Fere,
how that he Scholde this towr don stonde
be ony werk of Mannes honde."
Their request is granted. "Now certes, lordynges," quod Merlyne anon,
"and tyl that ȝe sen the same thyng don,
and why that the towr doth so falle,
Erst Schal there non deyen of ȝow alle."
thanne thankede they Merlyne Everychon,
alle these clerkis be on and be on.
Merlin explains all about the tower: thanne quod Merlyne to kyng Fortager:
"wylt thou now knowen the sothe her
why that thy werk doth so down Falle,
j schal openly it tellen amonges ȝow alle.
Now herkene, Sire kyng, what j schal say:
under the ground is a great water, here vndir this Grownd, j dar wel lay,
There goth a water bothe sterne & gret,
and under the water two dragons, vndyr wheche water ben there ȝet
Tweyne wondirful Stowte dragowns,
þe Moste oryble that ben Jn ony Regiowns,
one white, the other red, of wheche on Js al whit, anothir is Red,
of the dragowns that ben Jn that sted.

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Aboven wheche dragowns there ben, certeyn,
tweyne grete stones, that ben ful pleyn,
that over-whelmen bothe dragowns,
whiche that ben so wondirful of faciouns.
and whanne thei Felen the water Sore peyse
vppon hem bothe, & doth hem deseyse,
thanne tornen they hem bothe with gret Myht,
and Meveth al the Erthe Evene vpryht,
whiche Meveng that Maketh thy werk to falle;
this Scholen ȝe knowen bothe gret and smalle.
So that my borwes, aqwyt scholen they be,
And thy clerkis beheveded, ful trewle.
and therfore asaye ȝif that J soth seye,
owther be ony weys that J do lye.
For of this Mater thy clerkis knowen non thyng,
Ful Siker thou be, For alle here werkyng."
"Now certes," quod Fortager to Merlyne thanne,
"and this be soth, thou art a trewe Manne,
and therto the wysest that Evere was bore
of Erthlych Men that konnen of lore."
"Now, Merlyne," quod kyng Fortagere,
"of on thing that thow wost tellen me here:
how that this Erthe Myhte be don away;
J preye the, Merlyne, the Sothe Me Say."
"with cartes sone May jt be led henne,
& vppon the Bakkes of Many Menne."
thanne kyng Fortager let ordeynen anon
bothe cartes and werkmen Many on.
and Merlyne comaunded there jn haste
that the clerkys Scholden they kepen wel faste.
thus werkmen wrowhten bothe day & Nyht,
tyl that to this water they comen ful Ryht.
and whanne they hadden this water j-fownde,
anon they tolden it the kyng that stownde.
thanne gan the kyng thedyr to gon
with ful gret joye Ryht anon.
and Merlyne with hym thedyr he ladde,
For he wrowghte alle thyng as he hym badde.

2692 with two large flat stones over them;

2696 the dragons, annoyed by the pressure, turn, and make the earth quake.

2700

[leaf 99 *b*]

2704 Merlin exhorts the king to test the truth of his words.

2708

2712 On the king's question concerning the means of removing the earth,

2716 Merlin recommends carts and carriers.

2720

Labourers work day and night, till they find the water.

2724

Then the king goes thither with Merlin.

2728

2695. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.

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and whanne thider j-come they weren Echon,
this Merveillous water they beheldeu thusson.
thanne to hym clepyd he his cownsaylle,
The king speaks admiringly of Merlin to his council. and seide: "lordinges, with-owten Faylle, 2732
this child is wondir wis with-alle,
that can thus tellen how it schal falle,
and of this water that here now Js;
jt Merveylleth Me ful Mochel, j-wys. 2736
and seith he that vndir this water so clere
ben tweyne dragowns dwellyng jn fere.
and ȝit wot j Neuere what j schal do,
tyl he som cownseyl ȝeve me therto." 2740
He then asks him about the removal of the water. thanne cleped he Merlyne to hym anon,
of þat water to weten what scholde be don.
quod Merlyne: "grete diches we scholen here Make,
wherthorwgh this water schal forth Schake, 2744
thorwh this Medewe here anon,
and thus this water schal forth gon."

Ditches are dug. Thus weren these diches sone there Mad,
as Merlyne it ordeynede, comaunded, and bad. 2748
and this water his cowrs there hadde,
and be this craft jnto othire contres ladde.
Merlin predicts that the dragons will fight, and that one will be killed. thanne cam Merlyne to kyng fortagere,
and thus anon tolde hym there 2752
that—"also sone as the dragouns to-gyderes fele,
be-twixen hem schal be-gynnen a sory Mele,
For they to-gederis ful sore scholen fyhte,
and the ton the tothyr Schal slen owt Ryhte. 2756
He wants all the barons to see the fight. and therfore Sende thou thy Messengeris anon
To alle thy Barowns now Everychon,
to sen this bataylle that schal ben here
of these dragowns that scholen fyhten jn fere; 2760
For the bataylle of hem and that chawnse
Nis not with-owten gret Signyfyawnse."
Messengers are sent out. thanne sente kyng Fortager forth anon
his Messengerys, as faste as they Myhten gon, 2764
to warnen bothe Barown, bacheler, & knyht,

2762. *Signyfyawnſe*, the first *y* through correction.

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and alle othere that gon owther Ryden Myht.
and whanne they weren assembled Echon,
thanne seide kyng Fortager to hem anon, 2768 The assembled people are informed of Merlin's predictions,
and tolde hem of Manye a wondyr thyng
That scholde be-falle be Merlynes talkyng,
And How the two dragowns to-gederes scholen fyhte, [leaf 99 c]
and the ton the tothyr to slen anon Ryhte. 2772
thanne Ech to other seide, certeynle,
that this bataylle were ful good to se.
thanne axeden they of the kyng ful sone and wonder which of the
which of þe dragowns scholde on lyve gone. 2776 dragons is to survive.
than answered hem the kyng ageyn:
"that tolde he not Me ȝit, jn certeyn."
and whanne that this water owt was past, The water being drained,
thanne bothe tho stones Syen they jn hast, 2780 two stones appear to view.
whiche vppon the dragowns weren there
as that they lyen bothe Jn fere.
thanne axede Fortager of Merlyne anon The king asks how
how thyke stones a-wey Myhte ben don. 2784 these stones can be removed,
"ȝis, ȝis," quod Merlyne, "that Schal be do,
and non Man to harmen the worth of a slo.
For they scholen Meven Nevere a del,
Tyl that Ech other May Felen Ryht wel; 2788
and thanne to-gederis Scholen they fyhte,
Til the ton moste deyen be Ryhte."
thanne axede the kyng which of hem tweyne and which of the dragons
whiche ded that scholde ben, certeyne. 2792 is to die.
"Jn here Bataylle there schal be
Ful gret Signyfiaunce, J telle the,
and that ful gladly j wyle the Schewe
aforn thre of thy Barowns on a rowe." 2796
thanne clepede Fortager to hym anon Before three barons, who
thre Barowns that he trostyd most vppon. enjoy the king's particular confidence,
Anon seide Merlyne to hym thanne:
"Trostist thow wel on these thre Menne, 2800
and ben they trewe of thy cownsaille,
what so Evere it May avaylle?"
"ȝe, Sekerly, Merlyne," quod Fortager,
"Non trewere knowe j neþer fer ne Neer." 2804
"thanne May J," quod Merlyne, "tellen the

of swich thyng as thow tellest me.

Merlin tells that the red dragon shall be slain,

J wele that thow knowe here, jn certayn,
that the Rede be the white schal ben slayn.
but fyrst gret peyne Schal he have,
Er from the Rede he May gon save.

and that his death is of great significance.

and the deth of the Rede dragown
Schal Notyse ful gret Significaciown,
and the victorye of the dragown so whyt.
For the it is ful hard to knowen Jt,
but tyl that the Bataylle be alle j-do,
of this thing schalt thou knowen no Mo."
whanne this peple thidir comen Echon,

One of the stones is removed, and the white dragon appears.

Ful hastely hadden they vpe the ston.
thanne Syen they this whyte dragown,
that was wondyr oryble of Facyown.
and whanne this peple this dragown there say,
they weren sore abaschet, alle with-owten Nay.
and whanne that thus they hadden J-do,

Then they go to the other stone, and find the red dragon, more horrible than the white,

To the tothyr ston wente they tho.
thanne the Rede dragown syen they there,
that More oryble was thanne the toþer were.
thanne was the peple abasched wel More
an hundred Fold thanne they weren to-fore;
For more Feers he was & More hydows,
also More Egre, & mochel More Spytows,
thanne the whyte was Jn ony degre,
thus thowghte the peple, ful certeynle.

and more likely to win the battle.

So that thowghte kyng Fortager
that the Rede the white scholde scomfyten ther.
thanne seide Merlyne to the kyng:
"Now haue my borwes Excused for alle thyng!"
"Merlyne," quod Fortager, "so they be,
Of alle thinges qwyt, ful Sekerle."

[leaf 99 d] A terrible struggle begins;

Thanne to-gederis Ronnen these dragowns tweyne
Ful vigerously there, Jn certeyne,
with here teeth and here pawes so scharpe,
that wondyr Jt is of here Fyhtyng to carpe.
Fo[r] Neuere herden ȝe telle jnto this day

2839. *tweyne*, the last letters almost obliterated.
2843. MS. *ffo.*

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Of tweyne bestes swich anothir afray.
and thus veleynesly gonnen they fyhte
al that day, tyl jt was Nyhte,
and vppon the Morwen, tyl it was day,
So that al the peple that the batayll*e* say,
wenden þat the Rede þe whyte scholde han slayn,
so spetows was þe batayll*e* betwixen hem tweyn;
Tyl atte laste the white dragown
caste fyr on þe Rede abowtes jn vyrown,
and hym there brende to the ded;
So hadde the white victorye in that sted.
and the thrydde day aftyr next sewenge
Deyde the white dragown, with-owten lesenge.
So that they seyden thanne Everychon
that so gret a merveill*e* seyn they Neuere non.
thanne quod Merlyne to kyng Fortagere:
"Now begynne thy towr, and Maket here
as gret as þou wylt, and also hy,
For it schal neuere fallen, trewly."
Thanne comanded Fortager anon
that jn haste this werk scholde be don.
So that this towr they Maden ful hy,
Ful large, and Ryht strong, sekerly.
thanne of Merlyne often axede þe kyng
what of the dragouns was þe signefyeng.
"Sire kyng, it is forto Signefye
thynges þat han ben & scholen ben, trewelye;
and 3if that thou wylt Enswren me here
Me not to deseisen Jn non Manere,
Ne non Man with-jnne thy kyngdom
To don Me non Maner of distroccion,
J schal the tellen the Signefyaunce
a-forn thy cownseyl, with-owten dowtaunce."
thanne kyng Fortager Ensured hym anon,
that Neuere harm to hym scholde be don.
"Go thanne faste," quod Merlyne anon,
"and sende aftyr thy cownseyl Everychon,
and also aftyr thy clerkis jn fere,

2844 2848 2852 2856 2860 2864 2868 2872 2876 2880

it lasts a day and a night.

At length the white dragon burns up the red;

he expires, himself, on the third day.

The building of the tower can now be continued.

Merlin is asked about the signification of the dragons.

On condition of personal safety,

he promises to explain it all.

Councillors and astrologers are sent for.

2876. *thy*, *h* inserted afterwards.

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To heren what that j schal seyen here."
thanne dede fortager his comaundement;
and whanne they weren comen alle present,
Merlin first reproves the astrologers for undertaking what they cannot accomplish. thanne seide Merlyne amonges hem alle:
"3e clerkis ben folys, what so befalle,
to Entermeten 3ow of ony thyng,
but 3if 3e cowden bryngen it to Endyng.
and in as Moche as folys that 3e be,
and fowle han faylled, ful certeinle,
3e ben worthy to haven 3owre gwerdon,
that 3e han deservyd be Ryht Reson.
He tells of their dark studies, and how the devil has shown them that they must die for Merlin's sake. wel wot j 3e syen that j was bore,
but he that schewede it to 3ow thore,
schewed 3ow there ful openlye
that For me scholden 3e Nedys deye;
and also gret doel he schewed 3ow there,
For he hadde me lost jn swich Manere;
whiche was 3oure cause, ful certeynle,
to comaunden kyng Fortager me forto sle.
but swych a lord j hope that j have,
thorwgh goddis helpe, me forto save;
He declares he will make the devil a liar, if they promise to follow Merlin's injunctions. and the devel a lyere schal j Make,
3e scholen neuere deyen for My sake,
3if that Sewrawnce 3e wylen Me do
of thyng that j schal speken 3ow vnto."
[leaf 100 a] Whanne that they Herdyn Merlyne so seyn,
The astrologers are delighted. thanne ful of Joye weren they, ful pleyn,
So of here deth Excused to be,
and seiden to Merlyne ful benyngnele:
" what Evere thou biddist vs to don,
we scholen it Fulfillen Ryht anon.
For we knowen wel, with-owten lesynge,
that þou art the wysest Man levenge."
Merlin commands them to give up their practices, "3e scholen me Ensuren, Er that 3e gon,
of this craft neuere to Entermeten Non.
and j comande 3ow alle jn fere
to confess, To ben confessid with herte clere,
and to do penance. and 3oure flesch to putten jn discyplyne
to strong subiecciown & to gret pyne,
that 3owre Sowles ne dampned be;

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doth as j cownseille 3ow, certeinle!"
So that they thankyd hym Everychon,
and grauntyd his comaundement to don.

The astrologers gratefully assent.

Thus Merlyne deliuered the clerkys Echon,
that hym deden seken for this Encheson.
thanne to Merlyne spak kyng Fortagere:
"thou behyhgtest forto tellen Me here
the signefycaciown of the dragowns tweyne."
"The white dragown, j telle the certeyne,
Signefyeth here the sone of Costantyn,
That falsly was browht to Evele fyn."
and whanne Fortager herde this,
Ful sore he was aschamed, J-wys.
Thanne seide Merlyne to Fortager a3e:
"and thou wylt konnen Me non Mawgre,
j schal the tellen the syngnefyaunce
of alle thynges, with-owten dowtaunce."
"here Js non Man," quod Fortager thanne,
"but of My cownseyl Every Manne;
where-fore, Sire Merlyne, j preye the
the syngnefyaunce that þou wost tellen Me."
"The Rede dragown here doth syngnefye
thyn owne persone, ful trewelye;
and why, Sire, and jn what Manere,
J schal tellen the anon Ryht here.
wel knowest thow, kyng Fortagere,
that kyng Costantynes children al jn fere
dwelden here aftyr here Fadris ded,
that hadden Neyther cownseyl ne Red.
and 3if þou haddest don thy dever, trewely,
thou scholdest hem han kept ful tendyrly,
and to have 3oven hem ful trewe cownsaylle,
that Myhte ony thyng to the Rewm avaylle.
and wel knowest thou jn what Manere
the hertes of the peple thou hast geten here.
and whanne thow knew alle here Entent,
and that they loveden the, verament,

They are released.

Then Merlin explains that the white dragon signifies Pendragon.

Fortager feels confused.

Merlin adds,

before the whole council,

that the red dragon is the king himself.

He reminds him of the three princes,

whom he ought to have protected;

the way he stole the people's hearts;

2930. *white*, MS. *Rede* (!).

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his refusal to help the young king;

thanne, whanne thou knew this, certeynle,
From alle maner of Nedis thou withdrowh the.
and whanne that the peple Sowhte socowr
of the to haven For here grete langowr,
and the desireden kyng forto han ben,
thou hem answeredest as þou schalt sen:

his artful manner of rejecting the crown;

Ful smotheliche and jn this manere
To hem thou answeredest, al jn fere,
that thow woldest neuere here kyng be,
whyles that the kyng lyvede, ful sykerle.
Thanne they that thou toldest to this tale,
Thowghten the kyng to werkyn Bale,
and knewen wel be thy maner of spekyng
that thou desiredest the kynges mordryng;

the murder of King Constantin;

and so hym they slowen ful falsly.
thanne fledden bothe his bretheren ful prevyly

the flight of the princes;

For the drede that they hadde of the.
and thus art thow kyng ful falsle,

[leaf 100 b]

And thus the Regne thou ocupyest With Wrong,
and gret distrocciown dost Evere among.

and the execution of the regicides.

thanne, whanne they comen aȝen to the
be whiche the kyng ded was, Sykerle,
thanne distroyedest þou hem Everychon,
so that on lyve ne lefte not on."
thanne seide the cownseil to Fortager there:
"Herkene what Merlyne seith now here."

Fortager acknowledges the truth of Merlin's words,

"ȝis, Forsothe," quod kyng Fortager,
"He seyth ful soth that he seith her.
and j knowe ful wel that thou art
a passing wis man jn Every part.

and desires to know about his own death.

but of on thing, Merlyne, j preye to the
the sothe that thow wost tellen to me:
on what deth that J schal deye."

Merlin applies more distinctly to Fortager what he has said of the red

"that kan j wel," quod Merlyne, "trewelye.
have j not told to the the signyfiaunce
of bothe dragouns, with-owten varyaunce?
ȝit j wele that thou knowe be me
that the Rede dragown, Sykerle,

2980. *ded*, the last *d* through correction.
2994. *varyaũce*, *v* corrected from *f*.

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Signefyeth thyn owne persone,
that was so strong and myhty of bone;
and the whit dragown signefieth, certeinle,
the tweyne bretheren that now fled j-be,
For drede that thou wost han hem slayn;
this js the signyfyaunce, Jn certayn.
and why so longe they fowhten so snelle,
the signyfyaunce j schal the telle:
jt signyfieth that thou hast so long j-holde
wrongfully here erytage with werkis bolde.
and þat the white dragown þe Rede brende so,
the same the children scholen the do.
and knowe thou wel now, jn certeyn,
that thike tyme thy towr stont but jn veyn,
and the ne schal waraunte nonthyng, jn feye;
and jn this maner, Fortager, schalt thou deye."
thanne, whanne Fortager herde this,
anon he axede of merlyne, J-wys,
where that thyke tweyne children be.
"jn the see," quod merlyne, "ful Sykerle,
with ful gret strengthe and gret Navye,
jnto this lond to a-ryven, ful Sekerlye,
veniance of the to taken here,
that slowh here brothir jn swich manere.
and wete þou wel, with-jnne thre monthis day
they scholen aryven, sire, jn good fay!"

and of the white dragon,

their long fight,

and the burning of the red one.

Fortager asks where the princes are.

Merlin answers: "On the sea, on their way here,

to take vengeance!"

Chap. III.

Ful sory was kyng Fortager tho,
whanne he herde tellen it scholde be so,
and axede of merlyne anon Ryht
3if that ony othirwyse it myhte ben dyht.
"Nay, syker, Fortager," quod merlyne tho,
"Non othirwyse now ne may it go."
and whanne that fortager wiste al this,
that tho children scholde comen, j-wys,
thanne warnede he his peple anon
that to hym scholden they comen ful son,
azens that jlke same day
That merlyne hym of tolde, with-owten Nay.

King Fortager, greatly troubled,

calls in his forces.

Fortager goes to Winchester.

So that to wynchestre he gan to go,
and al his power with him tho.
but the cawse wiste neuere a man,
but they that of his cownseyl weren than.

Merlin goes to Northumberland,

and whanne merlyne hadde endyd this mater,
thanne took he his leve of kyng Fortager,
and thanne forth to blase he gan to gon,
and told hym of these merveilles echon.

[leaf 100 c]

So that Blayse gan hem to Wryte,
and jnto his Book forto endyte.

and stays with Blasy.

So that merlyne with Blayse dwellede there,
tyl þe bretheren aftyr hym gonnen enqwere.
and kyng Fortager at wynchestre abod,
as he be merlyne ferst vndirstood.

The people of Winchester see a large fleet approaching.

And that same day, with-owten lesynge,
the peple of Wynchestre syen comenge
Fer jn the see a ful gret Navye,
where-offen they merveilled, ful trewelye;
jn whiche vesselys weren, certeynle,
both costantynes sones, as j telle the.

Fortager orders his men to defend the harbour.

and whanne that Fortager herde of this,
Ful sore he was abasched, j-wys,
and comaunded his men to armes anon
alle so faste as they myhten gon,
and also his port forto defende,
therto he bad hem forto atende.

They perceive the banners of their rightful king.

& whanne at the port they weren echon,
thanne beheldẽ they jn-to the se anon,
and Syen here ryhtful kynges banere
Ful openly displayed ryht there,
wheche weren the armes of costantyn;
they knewen the confanouns wele & fyn.
thanne merveillede this peple everichon
how that this thing thus myhte be don.

The fleet lands.

So that these vesselis aryvede to londe,
as J do 3ow to vndirstonde.
and whanne to londe a-ryved they were,
thanne axede the peple of hem there

3036. *and*, *d* partly obliterated.

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what manere of peple was there with-jnne.
thanne answerid they, & wolde not blynne:
"They ben the vesselis of Pendragown,
that to this Rewm hath good Resown;
and also vter, his brothir so dere,
jnto his Rewm with him cometh here
of Fortager Forto taken veniaunce,
that hem hath don ful gret Noysaunce,
and as a fals man, J vndirstond,
vntrewely & vniostly halt he here lond."
and whanne that the peple vndirstod this,
that it was here owne lord, J-wys,
That with hym browhte so gret meyne,
thanne weren they abasched, ful Sykyrle,
and nolden non thyng ayens hem do,
Lest aftyr it myhte hem tornen to moche wo,
and comen and seiden to Fortager,
that ayens hem wolden they not fyhten ther.
and whanne Fortager this vndirstood,
thanne for wraththe he was nyhe wood.
thanne spak he to his owne men,
that hym wolde not Forsaken than,
the castel wel to kepen ouer alle thyng.
so seyden they wolden, with-owten fayllyng.
thanne a-ryvede these schepis there anon,
and the peple of the cuntre thider faste gonne gon,
and ayens hym they wenten be on acord,
& there hym resceyveden as here lord.
thanne kyng Fortager with his meyne,
to his castel wenten they ful hastyle.
and there bothe bretheren be on asent
hym vigerously asayllede, verament.
So that Pandragoun Fyr dede jn caste
jnto that castel, that brende ryht faste,
where-jnne this Fortager Syker was brent,
as this storye scheweth, verament.
And thus tooken bothe bretheryn Jn Fere
harde veniaunce on here enemyes there.

Being told that Pendragou and Uter have come to take vengeance on Fortager,

the treacherous usurper,

they refuse to fight.

Fortager, mad with rage,

exhorts his adherers.

The people receive their lawful prince.

Fortager flees to a castle.

The princes attack it,

and set fire to it.

Fortager perishes in the flames.

[leaf 100 d]

3093. *he* added above the line.

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Fortager's kinsmen (see p. 52) are driven into another castle.

thanne the kynnes-men of Fortager
vppon the crystene werreden ther,
and the tweyne bretheren gonnen hem asaylle,
and jnto a castel hem droven, Sauns faylle.

The princes confer how to conquer it.

thanne took pandragon cownseyl there,
and vter his brothyr, alle Jn fere,
how that thike castel they myhten wynne
and ek the peple that was with-jnne.

Five barons who were present at the dragons' fight,

at whiche cownseyl fyve barouns there were,
that to-forn tyme the dragowns syen fyhten there,
and herden al the significaciown.
how that Merlyne tolde al & Som
of tho tweyne dragowns to Fortager,

tell the princes about Merlin,

To Pandragown and to his brothir they tolden ther,
and of the merveylles everychon
that Merlyne hem tolde be on and be on.
"and wete ȝe wel, Syres, that he Js on
the wysest man, except god alon."
thanne seide Pandragown to these Barowns:
"where dwellith that man & in whiche Regyowns?"

but do not know where to find him.

"we weten neuere," quod they ageyn,
"where hym to fynden, Jn certeyn,
Neþer jn what contre hym to have,
also god oure sowles moot save!
and ȝif he be owht jn this partye,
we scholen hym fynde, wel Sekerlye."

Messengers are sent in search of him.

thanne forth sente pandragown anon
Messengeris, as faste as they cowde gon,
To serchen al the lond owt ryht,
ȝif that there cowde ony wyht
hem tellen Merlyne Forto Fynde,
that holden was so gentyl & kynde.

Merlin meets them in a town, where they are taking a meal.

And Merlyne, that knew al this ful wel,
Tolde it to Blayse thanne everydel,
and from Blayse thanne wente anon,
& Forth to a town he gan to gon,
there as the Messengeris at Mete were.
and jn this gyse to hem cam he there:

3113. MS. *him*. 3130. *in* added above the line.
3141. *ffynde*, *n* corrected from *y*.

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lik as a schepperde he hadde j-be,
with a staf on his Nekke, ful sekerle,
and ek a peyre of ful Boystous schoon,
vppon his Feet thanne were they doon,
and vppon hym a clowted cote,
that heng adown abowten his throte,
and therto he hadde a ful gret berd,
þerwith to han Mad Many Men aferd,
So that he Semede jn alle degre
a man of Evel lykynge, ful sekyrle.
and thus to þe same place he cam anon
þere as þe Messengeres Eten Everichon,
and seide to hem Jn this Manere:
"Ful Evel don ȝe ȝoure dever here
and ȝoure lordis arende also,
Forto Seken Merlyne that ȝe scholden go."
and whanne they herde thus hym Seyn,
"what jn þe devellis name, be-hold this veleyn!
where-offen with sorwe smateryth he
of ony thing that to vs longeth forto be?"
"jn feith," quod Merlyne thanne ageyn,
"and j hym scholde seken, jn certeyn,
J scholde hym Fynde Sonnere thanne ȝe,
j telle ȝow, Sires, ful Sykerle."
thanne Resen these Messengeris anon,
and toward Merlyne they gonne to gon,
& him þere axede anon Ryht
ȝif he him knew be day oþer be Nyht.
"ȝys, Forsothe, J Knowe Hym Ryht Wel
and al his abydyng Every del.
but that he tolde Me, Jn certeyn,
that ȝowre travaylle was but jn veyn;
For thowgh ȝe fownden him jn this contre,
with ȝow wolde he not gon, Sykerle.
but goth to ȝowre lord now ageyn faste,
and that the castel to taken he have non haste,
tyl that Augwys be ded other slayn,
of wheche castel he js lord, certayn.

He appears in the shape of a shepherd,

with a huge forbidding beard,

and tells them that they do their duty badly.

They are indignant.

He adds that he could find Merlin quicker than they.

They then rise and ask if he knows him.

[leaf 101 *a*]
"Yes," says Merlin,

"but he would not go with you. Tell your lord to leave the castle, till Augwis is dead,

3166. MS. *develli/name.*
3176. *he* corrected from *they.*

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—two of those five barons are dead already—

and wete ȝe wel that of thyke barownes fyve
there ben but thre now left on lyve,
that Ferst tolden the kyng of Merlyne,
whiche that cowde so Mochel of devyne.
and þerfore to ȝowre lord that ȝe telle,
what Maner aventure so hym befalle,
ȝif that Merlyne he wyle with speke,

and to come here himself."

jnto this contre hym-Self Moste Reke,
and aftyr him Serchen jn Market & town
abowtes al this contre Jn vyrown."

The messengers look at each other in surprise, and Merlin disappears.

The Messengeris vndirstoden riht wel
what to hem that seide Merlyne Everydel,
an ech of hem on other lokede welfaste;
thussone Merlyne owt of here syhte was paste.
thanne spoken they to-gederes hem be-twene:
"with the devel haven we spoken, j wene.
what Scholen we don of this Mateer
That he to vs spak of now heer?"

They resolve to return home.

"Infeyth," quod on of that compenye,
"To owre lord welfaste we scholen vs hye,
and aforn hym to Rehersen we scholen ben bolde
Every word as this Man hath vs tolde."
and forth they Ryden Everychon,
Tyl jnto that ost they comen anon

Before the king and his retinue,

There as the kyng was with his Meyne;
Streyht to hym comen they, ful Sykerle.
whanne þat kyng Pandragoon gan be-holde,
For joye he be-gan his armes to Folde,
and hem axede anon there presente:
"han ȝe owht Fownde for that ȝe wente?"

they tell what has happened.

"The sothe to tellen we ȝow Enswre,
how it vs happede, and what aventure."
That tolden they the kyng, with-owten lak,
jn what Maner this veleyn to hem Spak.

Those acquainted with Merlin, marvel at the hideous shape of the soothsayer,

thanne they that herden hem speken jn this manere,
that to-forn tyme knewen Merlyne there,
Merveyllede that ony so hydows a man
to hem swich Materis Scholde Meven than.
For they wisten not, with-owten dowtance,

—two of those five barons are dead already—
and to come here himself."

that Merlyne cowde taken ony oþer semblaunce
but onlyche his owne Jn properte;
Of this Merveyleden they, ful certeynle. 3228
but thanne wisten they there ageyn
that no man ne cowde not, jn certeyn,
tellen of tho wondris alle
Sauf on[l]y Merlyne, how so befalle. 3232
thanne axeden [they] þe messengeris jn hye
jn what maner of contre that they hym sye.
thanne answerede the messengeris ageyn:
"To oure Jn he cam, Jn certeyn, 3236
there as we kten, 3e mown vndirstond,
jn the contre of Northhumberlond."
thanne seiden they holiche, al that rowte,
that jt was Merlyne with-owten dowte, 3240
& that he desirede aftyr here knoweng,
onliche that there him scholde seken the kyng.
and whanne they comen jnto Northhumberlond,
as J do 3ow vtterly forto vndirstond, 3244
Non tydynges ne cowden they heren ther
of Merlyne, the devyn, nethir Fer ne Ner.
and as the kyng there gan forth to Ryde
Jn his jornes be eche a syde, 3248
and as thorwgh a pleyn he gan to gon
and with him his meyne everichon,
they syen a drove of bestes ful gret
and therto an herdeman keping that hepe. 3252
so that they axede hym anon
whens he was, & whedir he wolde gon,
"Sires, j do 3ow to vndirstonde
that j am of Northhumberlonde. 3256
and Rihtnow a good man cam to me,
and seide that kyng Pandragon sikerle
jn this contre a man scholde Seke
that is bothe wys, good, and meke." 3260
"that is fulsoth," quothen they thanne,
"kanst þou vs owht tellen of that manne?"

but understand that no one but Merlin can have told such things.

Hearing that the incident took place in Northumberland,

all feel convinced.

The king goes to Northumberland in [leaf 101 b] search of Merlin.

One day they see a herd with a drove of cattle.

The herd speaks to the king's men about Merlin.

3232. MS. *ony*. 3233. MS. *axeden þe*.
3237. *there*, the first *e* blurred.
3241. *&* added in the left margin. 3244. *vtterly*, *v* blurred.

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thanne answerid this vyleyn ageyn:

The herd says he has some news to impart to the king privately,

"ȝe, and J myhte sen the kyng, jn certeyn,
j wolde hym tellen of swich tydyng
of wheche to ȝow j ne wele Schewen non thing."
"thanne com with me," quod this good man,
"and to the kyng j wele schewen the anon."
thanne quod this vileyn to him ageyn:
"my bestes scholde j evele kepen, jn certein;

but is not willing to leave his cattle.

but ȝif he wele comen hidir to me,
J schal hym tellen, ful certeinle,
Where he schal fynde that ilke persone
For whom jnto this contre he is gone."
thanne departyd he from this vileyn anon,

The king is informed,

and to the kyng streyht is he gon,
and tolde the kyng jn Wordis fewe
the Wordis of the vilein al on rewe.
"Anon lede me thedyr," quod the kyng,
"and lete vs make non lengere taryeng!"

and comes quickly to the spot.

thus thanne ladde he forth þe kyng jn hye
to that same herdeman, ful trewelye.
thanne seide this goodman to that vyleyn:
"lo, Felawe, here is the kyng, certeyn;
Now telle him here thy lykyng,
For siker þou be, this is the kyng."

"Thou seekest Merlin," says the herd.

"Sire kyng, forsothe J telle now the
that merlyne thou sekyst, ful sekyrle.
but to fynden he is ful ylle,
but ȝif hym-self wile concente þertylle.

"Go into the nearest town, and he shall come to thee."

And therefore jnto the nexte town thou go,
and thussone he schal comen the to.
with the [to spe]ken þere wil he ful ryht,
J sey the tr[ewe]ly, ful gentyl knyht."
"how schal j hym knowen?" quod the kyng,
"but ȝif of hym J hadde som tokenyng?"
"Sire kyng, ȝif that thou leve not me,
Sey ellis of Fals cownseyl that j be!"

The king believes him.

"J mistroste not," quod the kyng tho,
"But that it is trewe thou seist me to."

3293–94. Hole burnt in the paper.
3300. *it*, corrected from *is*.

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so paste the kyng thanne forth anon
owt of þat forest, to towne gan he gon.
And thussone to hym cam there — In the town there comes
a semly man, arayed jn onest manere, 3304 a seemly man,
and seide: "sire kyng, welfownde ȝe be!
Merlyne, the devyn, sente me to the,
and sente the to seyne, ful sekerlye,
that the same was merleyne, trewelye, 3308 who tells that the herd and Merlin are the same person,
whiche kepte the bestes Jn here pasture,
And, sire, be this tokene, J ȝow ensure,
that to towne scholde he comen to the, that Merlin will visit him
whanne þou of hym haddest nede, sikerle. 3312 in time of need,
But non gret mester ȝit Hast thow, [leaf 101 c]
and of goode tydynges J schal tellen the now,
that merlyne sente the to say
by me, sire kyng, this same day. 3316
knowe thow wel, for certeynlye,
that kyng haugwis is ded, trewelye, and that Augwis has been slain.
and þat thy brothir vter hath hym slayn,
wite thou wel this, pandragon, jn certayn." 3320
and whanne the kyng herde this,
Ful mochel thanne he merveilled, j-wys. The king is surprised.
"Js this trewe that thou tellest me?"
"Sire, ȝe, for he wyle not lyen, sykerle, 3324
and a fool thou art, but thou it leve,
For here-offen the sothe wel schalt þou preve."

Thanne charged the kyng tweyne messengeris anon — He sends messengers
that Jn alle haste they scholden gon— 3328 to ascertain the truth.
"to knowen ȝif this thing now trewe be,
and doth me to wetene ful hastyle."
so forth reden the messengeris anon,
and with othir messengeris metten they thusson, 3332 They meet other messengers, who bring the news of Augwis' death.
From vter to pandragown, jn that sted,
hym forto tellen how haugwys was ded.
whanne þe messengeris thus metten jn fere,
ayen to-gideris tornede [they] in fayr manere, 3336
and hym tolden jn cownseyl, certayn,

3326. *preve*; before is a crossed-out *b*. 3336. MS. *tornede in*.

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jn what maner vter haugwys hadde slayn.
The king enjoins secrecy, thanne charged the kyng hem ful hyghly
that this thing, algates to kepen Jt prevy,
and is full of wonder. and merveillede gretliche ouer alle thyng
how merlyne of this scholde haue knoweng,
and Jn his herte merveilled ful gretle
Jn what maner that haugwys ded scholde be,
and thowhte of merlyne more to enqwere,
3if of that mater he cowde tellen hym there.
so that al a day jn that town gan he abyde,
When coming out of church the same day, he is accosted by a seemly man, and as from the mynstre he cam þat tyde,
with hym there mette a semly man,
and to kyng Pandragon he seide than:
"Sire kyng, al heyl and wel thou be!
here jn this town what thyng seken 3e?"
"j abyde merlyne," quod the kyng,
"with hym to haue som maner of spekyng."
"Sire kyng," quod this good man thanne,
"j ne hold 3ow not 3it so wys a manne
merlyne to knowen, thowgh 3e hym sye,
J sey 3ow, sire kyng, ful sekyrlye.
who says he is Merlin. and þerfore clepeth hem that him han se,
and axe of hem 3if that merlyne j be."
The king's followers are summoned; So that the kyng, for hem he sente anon,
and toforn hym comen they everychon.
"Lordynges," quod the kyng to hem thanne,
"here byden we merlyne, þat worthy manne.
Js þere ony of 3ow that hym kan knowe,
and he here stood jn this rowe?"
they say they would certainly recognize Merlin, if they saw him. "Forsothe, sire kyng, that may not be
but 3if we hym Syen, ful sikerle."
thanne seide this goodman to the kyng:
"this were now a wondirful thing,
how that anothir man they scholde knowe,
whanne þat hem-self they konnen neþer hy ne lowe."
thanne answered these lordis ageyn:
"his werkis we knowen not, jn certeyn,
but his Semblaunce we knowen ful wel,

3373. *an/wered*, the first *e* corrected from *r*.

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and we hym syen Everydel."
thanne seide this goodman to hem ageyn:
"how scholde ȝe ony Man knowen, jn certeyn,
but ȝif ȝe knowen his Semblaunce?
This Were to me a Wondyrful chawnce."
thanne clepede Merlyne the kyng anon,
and jnto a prevy chambre they gonne to gon,
and seide: "sire kyng, J am joyful of the
and of ȝoure brothyr, sire, ful certeinle.
For J am the same persone, with-owten dwere,
that ȝe comen forto Seken here.
Now goth owt of this chambre anon,
and ledeth me toforn hem Echon
that tolden to ȝow they cowde knowen Me,
and they alle wylen seyn, ful sykerle,
that ȝe haven fownden the same Merlyne
whiche that they clepen the goode devyne."
thanne wente Pandragown forth anon,
and clepid his Meyne Everychon.
thanne took Merlyne his owne Semblaunce,
that he to-forn hadde, with-owten variaunce.
and thanne, anon as they hym Sye,
they seiden it was Merlyne, trewlye.
"thanne avyse ȝow wel," quod the kyng,
"that it be Merlyne with-owten lesyng."
and they seiden: "wel we hym knowe
among alle this peple jn this Rowe."
"j wolde fayn weten," quod the kyng,
"ȝif j Evere to ȝow spak ony thyng,
Er that j cam jnto this town;
of this wolde j fayn knowen þe Resown."
"Sire," quod Merlyne to the kyng thanne,
"For certeyn, J am the same Manne
that walkede ȝondir jn ȝone forestes,
kepyng alle tho forseid bestes.
also the same Man am J
that told ȝow of haugwys, trewely."
thanne seide the kyng to hem ageyn:
"Evele knowen ȝe Merlyne, jn certeyn!"
thanne axede the kyng of merlyne there

[leaf 101 d]

Merlin takes the king into a private room,

repeats who he is,

and asks to be brought before the retinue again.

Merlin assumes his natural shape,

and is recognized by all.

In answer to the king's question,

he says he is the same as the cowherd,

and the same who told him of Augwis' death.

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how of augwis he knew and jn what manere. 3416

Merlin further tells how he warned Uter against Augwis,

"Sire," quod merlyne, "as it not ben scholde,
Augwys vter Mordred han wolde.
Anon to thy brothyr j wente jn hye,
and told hym al his purpos vtterlye, 3420
and how that augwys hym ordeynede to sle;
al this j told hym, ful Sykerle.
and 3it he ne wolde not me beleve,
tyl that the sothe him-self dede preve. 3424

how Uter kept awake all night,

so that 3owre brothir wook alone al nyht,
tyl that the sothe he preven myht,
and were awayted the comenge
of Augwis, þat was so crewel a kynge. 3428

how Augwis came stealing into Uter's tent with a drawn knife,

thanne atte laste cam this haugwis
jnto vteris pavyloun, þat was of prys.
and 3oure brothir let hym entren anon,
with a scharpe knyf drawen, jnto his won, 3432
hym forto hauen slayn, verayment.
so þat vter he sowhte al abowtes þe tent,
but he ne cowde hym not Fynde,
wherfore he mornede jn his mynde. 3436
and owt azen he wolde han gon,
but 3oure brothir mette with hym anon.

and how Augwis was killed.

So there fowhten they to-gederis, jn certayn,
that vter, 3oure brothyr, hath hym slayn." 3440

Whanne that the kyng herde al this,
anon he axede of hym, j-wis,
jn what Semblance he myhte be,
whanne that with his brothir spak he. 3444

Merlin was on that occasion in an old man's shape.

"Sire," quod Merlyne thanne a-geyn,
"Jn lykenesse of an old man, certeyn."
[leaf 102 a] "Tolde 3e Owht hym What man 3e Were?"
"Nay, sire," quod merlyne, "jn non manere; 3448
Nethyr he ne schal not it knowen for me,
tyl 3owre-Self it hym telle, ful Sikerle."

The king asks Merlin to go with him.

Thanne seide to hym Pandragown, the kyng:
"Now, dere Frend, j preye 3ow ouer alle thyng 3452
that 3e wylen now gon with me,
For of 3oure cownseyl have j nede, parde."

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"Sire, thanne sone wyle 3oure Meyne wroth be,
3if that 3e Welen owht leven on Me."
"Merlyne, 3e han so Mochel to Me told
of vter, My brothir, Many fold,
that 3if it now soth be,
For Evere schal j now leven on the."
"thanne vndirstonde 3e, *with*-owt*en* varyaun*ce*,
þ*at* J to 3owr*e* [brothir] schal speken jn the same semblaun*ce*
that J was, whanne j hym tolde, certeyn,
how that haugwys hym wolde han slayn,
and that *with*-jnne this viij dayes it schal be."
"thanne preye j 3ow, Mer*l*yne, for charite,
that j Moot knowen the same Face,
whanne 3e with hym speken jn ony place."
"that scholen 3e, Sire, with good wille.
but of on thyng J Sey 3ow vntille:
that 3if Evere ony love 3e wyle haven of Me,
So that 3e kepen Jt Jn prevyte."

Merlin replies that the courtiers would object,

but promises to speak again with Uter in that same shape of an old man,

and to let the king know.

Thus aqweyntyd Merlyne with Pendragown,
and of hym took leve Jn that town.
So Forth to Blasye he gan to gon,
and dide hym it putten jn scripture anon,
that so be hym knowen we this storye,
wheche to vs is put Jn Memorye.
And Pandragown held forth his weye,
tyl that to his brothyr he cam, jn feye.
& whanne that vter his brothyr Say,
Ful Mochel Joye he Made that day,
and took the kyng anon on side,
and þ*er*e hym tolde that ilke tyde
how that haugwis he had slayn,
lik as Merlyne him ferst hadde told, certeyn.
"Now, goode brother, what myht he be,
That ferst discured to 3ow þ*is* destyne?"
"Now, so me god helpe," quod vter thanne,
"j Mer*v*eillede neu*er*e so Mochel of Manne.

Merlin and Pendragon part.

The former goes to Blasy,

the latter returns home.

Uter relates of Augwis' death.

The king inquires about the man who gave the warning.

3462. MS. *3owr' ſchal.*
3487–88. These two lines were omitted and then written up the margin.

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Uter is surprised that the king should know anything about this,

Of that ȝe me Seyn jn this throwe
whiche j wende neuere but that god and j hadde knowe.
and therfore I preye ȝow, for charyte,
how that ȝe jt wiste, now telleth me."
"J seye ȝow sekerly," quod Pandragown,
"j Jt now knowe be good Resown.
but, brothir vter, what good man was he
that from the deth warawnted the?"
"be the oth þat j owe to ȝow, my kyng,
j schal ȝow trewly seyn, to my knoweng.
j not what maner of man jt was,

but says that the warner seemed to be a good man.

but a good man he semede jn every plas,
and therefore the bettere j gan hym leve,
For aftyr, the sothe he dede me preve."
"Cowde ȝe hym knowen," quod Pandragown tho,
"jn ony place and he to-fore ȝow go?"
"ȝe, sire, forsothe," quod vter thanne,
"J schal hym knowen to-forn anothir manne."

The king tells that on a certain day the same man will call again.

"wel, Sire vter, thanne warne j the
that with-jnne xij dayes he wyle here be,
and only with ȝow wil he speke,
and to ȝow his herte wyle he breke.
but of on thing j preye ȝow, certeinle:

Uter promises to remain in the king's presence the whole of that day. [leaf 102 b]

that al that day ȝe ben to-forn me,
that j myhte knowen, as wel as ȝe,
what maner of man þat so he be."
And vter be-hyghte that so he Wolde,
and not to letten for ȝong neþer olde.
and thus bothe the bretheren Jn fere
of diuers materis spoken there.
and merlyne forth to Blasye wente,

Merlin informs Blasy of the last events,

and tolde hym alle these poyntes, veramente,
how the tweyne bretheryn of hym gonne speke,
& how þat vter of his fo gan hym wreke,
and how that Pandragown wolde hym asaye
be many poyntes and many a waye.
thanne axede blasie of merlyne there
how they lyveden and jn what manere.

3492. The first *j* added above the line.
3527. *blasie* added above the line.

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thanne seide Merlyne to blasie ageyn
that—"bothe ben they 3onge men, jn certeyn,
and gret nede they haven of good cownsaylle
of swich a man that myhte hem avaylle.
but fyrst jnto mirthe j wolde hem drawe
with lawghenges & boordes to maken hem fawe.
For j wot wel where woneth a fayr lady
that vter Loveth, paramours, trewely,
and so streyht to hym wyl j gon
with a lettre from his love anon.
For j knowe alle the wordis preve
that betwixen hem to-fore tyme hath be."

of life and character of the princes,

and of his own plans for the nearest future.

And þe xj day thanne next Sewenge,
To cowrt cam Merlyne faste rennenge
jn liknesse of a groom Messenger
that from his Love to hym cam ther,
and seide: "my lady greteth 3ow wel
with herte and Body Everydel,
and sente 3ow here a lettre to Rede
alone be 3oure-self jn prevy stede."
thanne took vter this lettre, verament,
and wende his love hadde it hym sent,
and Ryht gret Joye he gan to Make
of þe lettre for his loves sake.
thanne spak the lettre jn this Manere,
þat the Messenger he scholde lestene & here
and trowen that he to hym seide,
For so on hym hire arende sche leyde.
and this Messenger tolde Many prevy thyng
that vter had offen Ryht good knoweng,
so that þe bettyr wil hadde he to dwelle
For thinges þe Messenger gan hym telle.

On the fixed day, Merlin comes running to court as a messenger from Uter's lady-love.

The delighted prince takes the letter supposed to be sent by her,

and listens privately to the bearer.

thus alday taryede kyng Pandragown,
Tyl the lyht of day was Ny agon,
and Merveillede of Merlynes taryenge,
and why that so Longe was his dwellenge.
thussone Merlyne drowh hym on syde,
and þere took anothir lyknesse that tyde,

Pendragon wonders at Merlin's delay.

Merlin calls Uter's attention:

3531. *cownſayll*, *a* corrected from *e*.
3539. *preve*, the first *e* corrected from *y*.

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he stands there now in the warner's shape (cf. l. 3446).
Evene the same fygure and semblaunce
as whanne he warned vter of his chaunce.
Anon as vter him gan be-holde,

Uter embraces him,
he hym knew and jn armes gan folde,
and preyede hym for alle cowrtesye
with hym to abyden stedfastlye,
and that he wolde speken *with* the kyng
with-owten ony more taryeng.

and fetches Pandragon.
thanne tolde vter to Pandragown
that this good man was comen to town.
thanne axede the kyng of vter there
3if it were the same jn alle manere.
"3e, sire," quod vter, "with-owten dowte."
so forth wenten they bothe jn þat rowte,

Both princes are full of joy.
and comen bothe to this good man,
and þer of hym gret joye made than.
"wile 3e þat j to my brothir vter proclame
what man 3e ben and what is 3oure name?"

[leaf 103 c]
"3e, sire, J Wyle Wyth Ryht good Wylle
that to 3oure brothyr 3e seyn it vntylle."

Pendragon informs his brother that their visitor is the wisest of men,
thanne seide Pandragown to his brothyr dere:
"knowen 3e owht this man that is here?
J telle 3ow, brothir, ful certeinlye,
that this is the wisest man, trewlye,
that here on lyve may now be,
Of whom we han gret mester, ful sikerle.
For sweche konneng hath this man,
as here to-forn hym tellen j 3ow kan.

and that the warner and the letter-carrier are the same person.
for to 3ow cam non other messengere
but only this man that Js here.
and þe lettres tok 3ow this same man
that seide how he from 3oure love cam."
thanne abascht hym vter ful sore,
and of that man he wondred thore.

Uter is incredulous.
"how may j beleven this jlke thyng?
this were to me gret merveyllyng!"
"As wel mown 3e knowen this jlke dede
as of oþer thinges þat he to 3ow afore seide."

3592. MS. *Off*, through rough correction. 3595. MS. *forto*.

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thanne seide vter: "ful certeynle,
j kan not beleven that this scholde ben he."
the kyng preide Merlyne jn wordis fewe
that som Maner of tokenyng he wold hym schewe.
"Goth forth from me," quod Merlyne, "henne,
and anon j schal don hym Me kenne.
For j wele proven hym þe same semblance
Of that Garsown, with-owten varyaunce."
And forth he wente thanne anon,
and þat same semblance he took thusson,
& cam to vter and took his leve,
For that þe sothe he scholde preve.
"brother, the sothe knowen not now ȝe,
that this same verray Man Js he
that tolde how haugwis wolde ȝow han slayn?"
"ȝis, ful sekyr ȝe ben, brothyr, jn certeyn;
For bothe wete ȝe wel and vndirstonde
that he knoweth thinges jn dyvers londe,
bothe that is to comen and that js gon,
For of aventures kan he tellen Manyon.
wherefore, brothir, we welen hym preye
with vs to dwellen, be ony weye;
For aftyr his werkynge welen we do
of alle thinges that vs longen vnto."
thanne bothe bretheren gonnen hym beseche
with hem to dwellen, with ful fayr speche.
"For so mochel to vs hauen ȝe told
of dyvers thinges Manyfold,
wherefore that j beleve ȝow wel;
and that ȝe wolden Everydel
Taken Governaunce of My brothir and Me;
and it ȝow likede, it Myhte so be."
thanne answerede hem aȝen Merlyne:
"this schal j granten ȝow wel and fyne,
but j wile that ȝe knowen, certeinly,
of Myn doyng prevyly.
For ȝit Most j gon forther mo
to the hed of Gret Breteigne, how so j do.

The king appeals to Merlin.

Merlin appears again as messenger.

Uter is convinced

and praises Merlin's wisdom.

The brothers ask him to stay

and be their governor.

Merlin complies.

3626. *dwellen*, *w* corrected from *e*.
3635. *My*, *M* roughly corrected from *B*.
3642. *of* added above the line.

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Merlin promises his help in all troubles,

but weteth wel that j schal haue knowenge
Of alle 3owre nedis, with-owten varienge;
and Neuere deseisse schal j be 3ow se,
but that j schal helpen 3ow, Sekerle.
and þerfore chargeth not whanne j go,
For schortly schal j comen 3ow to.

and wishes to be openly welcomed when he comes to court.

and whanne that j come jnto 3oure howshold,
loke þat 3e joyen many fold
aforn 3owre meyne jn my Syht,
That there-offen mowe knowen Every Wyht."

[leaf 102 d]

Thus belefte merlyne with the kyng,
and with his Brother vter was dwellyng.

He goes

so atte laste from hem wolde he gon,
jn swich semblaunce þat they myhten hym knowen echon.

and comes,

So that whanne a3en he cam,
of hym made joye bothe child & man,
and wenten and tolden to the kyng
at eche tyme of merlynes comyng.
and algates whanne þe kyng þere-of herde,
Ful mochel joye of hym he ferde,

and is always received with joy.

and algates wente hym forto mete,
were jt jn feld oþer Jn strete,
and gret joye of hym made.
and ek al the meyne was ful glade,
and token the kyng anon on syde,
& thore hym tolde þat Jlke tyde
that he was the beste devyn, trewly,
except God that is al-myhtty.

The people want his advice with regard to the besieged castle.

"Now preyeth hym, Jn alle wyse,
that he wolde tellen 3ow jn what gyse
how that the castel to bryngen to ende,
and how this werre atte laste schal wende,
and of his kyn to haven victorye;
of this axe 3e hym, ful certeynlye."
the kyng answerede hem ageyn
that ryht gladliche he wolde it seyn.
whanne the thrydde day j-comen was,

3646. MS. *helpen*. 3648. *schortly*, *r* corrected from *l*.

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the cownseyl assemblede al jn on plas.
thanne the kyng aforn his cownseil
ENqwered of *Mer*lyne wondirly wel:
"Now, dere Frend," quod the kyng thanne,
"J knowe 3ow For Ryht a wys MAnne,
and for the beste devyn J 3ow knowe
jn al this world, owthyr hyghe o*þer* lowe.
that 3e wolden me tellen, j 3ow preye,
of diu*ers* thynges that J schal seye,
and how this castel that j schal have,
and EK MY MEyne, to kepen hem save."
thanne answeride MErlyne a-geyn:
"Syre, j wolde that 3e wisten, ful fayn:
For sethen his kynnes-MEn haugwis hadden lost,
Sethen that tyme MAden they non bost,
NE REkken but lytel, the sothe to say,
owt of this lond to gon here way;
and to MOrwe vndir trewe hem besende,
thanne fulsone schole 3e know*en* the ENde,
how they scholen *pro*fre*n* to 3elden ageyn
al *þat* they holden of 3oure fadyr, certeyn.
but 3it scholen 3e not don so,
For whanne here answere cometh 3ow vnto,
3e schole*n* 3ow offren hem to conveye
be sauf cou*n*dit and be RYht weye,
and owt of 3oure lond hem don lede,
and scheping hem ordeyne*n* jnto what stede,
jnto what contre that they wylen gon;
thus to hem scholen 3e answeren anon."
thanne the kyng Sente forth vlfyn
and thre other knyhtes with hym;
and *Mer*lyne hem charged with this MAssage,
as they weren knyhtes of hygh parage.

3680 The king's council assembles,

and Merlin is consulted

3684

3688

about the castle.

Merlin replies: "Augwis' kinsmen are now willing to leave the country.

3692

3696

Parley with them!

They will first offer to remain as vassals.

3700

But do not accept this offer!

3704

Let them go away!"

3708

The king accordingly sends Ulfin (cf. ll. 4745 ff.) and three other knights as negotiators.

3712

Forth these MEssengeris token here way
Streyht to the castel, as J 3ow say.
and whanne they with-jnne syen hem come*n*ge,
a3ens hem they come*n* *with*-owte*n* taryenge,
and axede of hem 3if—"MEssengeris 3e be?"
thanne vlfyn answerede & seide: "3e,

The people in the castle receive them,

3716

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listen to their message,
the kyng 3ow sente be vs to seyn
that thre wykys trwys scholen 3e hauen, certeyn." 3720
"thanne to counseyl scholen we go,
To wyten how that we mown do.
[leaf 103 c] Ryht Wondirfully sore Anoyed We be
consider their own helpless condition, of haugwis deth, ful certeynle; 3724
and therto hauen we non vytaylle
hire forto abyden, sires, saunsfaylle,
Neþer non Refrescheng we mown have
of oure frendis here vs to save; 3728
and jnto swich a day 3e grauntyn vs trewe,
but here to abyden, it wolde vs rewe.
For it were ful evel soiornenge
jn a place with-owten vytayllynge. 3732
and offer to yield up the castle but we hym don to vndirstonde
that this castel [we] deliueren jnto his honde,
and al the lond that longeth therto,
and we of hym to holdyn it for euere mo, 3736
and pay an annual tribute. and þerto every 3er hym forto 3elde
thrytty knyhtes with spere and schelde,
an hundryd destreres, & as many of palfray,
and an hundrid fawkowns, the sothe to say." 3740
And they acordyd alle Jn on.
The negotiators bring back this answer. so with this answere wente þe messengeres anon,
and tolden the kyng word and ende,
of this castel how it scholde wende. 3744
and whanne the kyng herde here answere,
anon he axede of merlyne riht there
what were here-offen best forto do.
Merlin repeats his previous advice. "3e," quod merlyne, "thow schalt not don so, 3748
For gret peryl it myhte be jn tyme comenge,
and stille jn this lond they weren dwellenge.
but j schal tellen the what thou schalt do:
anon sende a3en, with-owten mo, 3752
and bidde hem delyveren that castel,
For therto anon they scholen ben Lel,
For they ne hauen non maner of vytaylle,
J seye 3ow, Sires, with-owten faylle. 3756

3734. The pronoun is missing.

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and behote ȝe hem that they scholen gon
sauf with here lyves Everychon ;
And J ȝow Seye, wyth-owten Noye,
that schal ben to hem a passyng joye."
thanne the kyng aftyr Merlynes sawe
wrowht on þe morwe, whanne the day gan dawe,
Forth forto beren this answere
to hem that jn þe castel weren there.
and whan they of the castel herdyn this,
thanne Maden they bothe joye and blys,
and weren cowndyed thorwgh the Lond,
and browht to the se, as j vndirstond,
and a Redy Navye hem forth to lede
Jnto what lond owþer jnto what stede
that hem-selve they wolde to gon.
thus weren they Exyled Everychon
onliche be the cownseyl of Merlyne,
that was holden so good a devyne.
thus was Merlyne conseillour and lord
of the kyng & his brothyr, at on word ;
Tyl on an day there was to do
of thinges þat scholde come þe kyng vnto,
where-offen tweyne Barowns hadden Envye,
that with the kyng he spak so prevylye,
and seiden : "sire kyng, we merveillen Echon
that ȝe so beleven vppon this Man.
For wete ȝe wel, sire kyng, in certeyn,
that al his werkyng of the devel cometh, pleyn.
and þerfore we wolde jn onest Manere
that ȝe his compeny lefte here."
" that were me loth," quod the kyng,
" For j nolde him wraththen for non thyng."
"Sire," quod this Barown ageyn,
"j wile hym not Noyen, jn certeyn."
Now was this Barown ful of Envye
and ful of vices, ful trewelye,
and to the kynges cowrt cam vppon a day,
& there thus of Merlyne gan he to say,

Messengers are sent once more,

the king's offer is accepted with joy,

and Augwis' kinsmen go into exile.

Envious barons desire the king to give up Merlin's company.

The king is not willing.

3762. MS. *onþ*ᵉ.

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[leaf 103 b]

And of hym gret Joye thus he Wrowhte,
but Evere anothir was Jn his thowhte.

One of the barons, in the presence of the king and twenty knights,

there this barown clepede to-fore the kyng
twenty knyhtes, with-owten leseng.
"Now wile ȝe sen," quod this Barown thanne,
"Merlyne here, so worthy a Manne,
that tolde the kyng howh Fortagere
jn his castel scholde brenne riht þere.—

asks Merlin to foretell his death.

and therfore preye j ȝow, for charite,
of My siknesse that ȝe wolden tellen Me,
& that ȝe welen tellen Me vtterlye
On what Maner of deth that j schal dye."

Merlin, knowing the baron's bitter heart,

Thanne answerede Merlyne, that knew ful wel
his Malencolyvs herte Everydel:
"ȝe han me preid that j schal Seye
to ȝow of ȝoure deth, trewelye.
knowe ȝe wel that þe same day
that deyen ȝe scholen, wit-owten Nay,

says that the baron will fall off his horse and break his neck.

of an hors ȝowre Nekke schal to-breke."
Aforn alle these knyhtes thus gan he speke.
thanne seide the Barown to the kyng:
"God me defende from his talkyng!"
tho wente he hom jn-to his contre,
and there a whille dwelled he,

Later on, the baron comes to the king and feigns to be sick.

and cam aȝen thedir as þe kyng was,
and Feynede hym sore syk jn that plas,
and him forto sen he preyde the kyng,
and algates Merlyne with hym bryng,
so that Merlyne ne knowe jn Non degre
For what Maner cause thedir cometh he.

Merlin is summoned,

thanne cam Merlyne to the kyng,
and axede hym what was his willyng.
"ȝe Mosten to towne gon with Me,
a sik Man j preye ȝow þere forto se."
thanne clepid the kyng his prevy Meyne

and goes to the baron.

with him to gon that Man to se.
and whanne that thedyr they weren comen Echon,

3805. *&* added in the left margin.
3813. *an*, *a* through rough correction.

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thanne seide to the kyng this sik man anon :
"Sire, j preye 3ow, for charyte,
that 3owre devyne may tellen me
3yf j schal deyen of this syknesse,
oþer ellis to suffren ony more distresse."
"Sire kyng," anon quod merlyne thanne,
"of þis siknesse schal not deyen this manne."
thanne answerede the syk man, trewelye :
"now, good sire, of what siknesse schal j deye?"
"Forsothe, hangenge schalt thow ende,
and hangen þou schalt jnto thin ende."
and with that tornede him merlyn there,
and made a semblaunce as wroth he were.
thus whanne merlyne was forth gon,
this barown to the kyng seyde anon :
"Now mowen 3e knowen be his spelle,
a fool he is swyche thynges to telle,
that swyche tweyn dethes me doth devyse
whiche ben not cordyng jn non wyse!
And the thrydde tyme 3it j schal asaye :
To morwe wil j gon to on abbeye,
and that 3e welden thider hye,
and merlyne jn 3oure compenye,
and the abbot 3ow schal seyn
that on of his monkes is Sik, certein,
and 3ow schal preyen, for charite,
thike sike monk þat 3e wolden comen se
and merlyne with 3ow forto brynge."
the kyng him grantyd his askynge.
vppon the morewen, whanne it was day,
the kyng him Rod to that abbay,
and merlyne thedyr with hym rod,
So herden they masse, and þere abod.
Atte laste cam the Abbot there,
and to the kyng seide jn this manere :
"Ha, Sire kyng, and 3owre wylle Jt be,
that an old syk monk 3e wolden com se,
and 3owre devyne with 3ow to brynge,

3832. *thānē*, abbreviation mark in different ink.
3849. *dethes* added above the line.

The baron wants to know if he is to die from his sickness.

"No," says Merlin,

"thou shalt hang!"

The baron points out the inconsistency of the predictions,

and says he will try the third time,

counterfeiting a sick monk.

Next morning, the king and Merlin ride to the monastery.

[leaf 103 c]

They are solicited to go and see the monk.

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and it were 3owre wille, Sire kynge."
thanne seide the kyng to merlyne tho:
"Sire, with me wile 3e owht go?"
"3e, sire," quod merlyne, "ful gladly!"
and took the kyng on syde jn hy:

Merlin privately reproves the king for being a party to these pretences.

"Whanne ferst j a-qweynted with 3ow bothe,
thanne non fool helden 3e me, forsothe.
what, trowen 3e that J ne knowe, sekerlye,
vppon what deth this fool schal deye?
For now sore merveillen scholen 3e ful snelle
of a thing that j schal hym telle."
quod the kyng thanne to merlyne:
"may it be trewe he schal have swich fyne?"
"Now, Sire," quod merlyne, "but 3if it trewe be,
Neuere here-aftyr ne leve thow me!
He says, however, he will foretell the baron's death once more.
and 3it er that j parte from his compenye,
J shal hym tellen how that he schal dye."
So wenten they forth al jn fere,
lyk as the abbot hem ladde there.
In reply to the abbot's request,
thanne seide the abbot to the kyng:
"Sire, and j dorste preyen 3ow of on thyng:
that 3owre devyn 3ow wolde seye
3if this monk of this maladye schal deye."
and merlyne answerede anon there
jn maner as that wroth he were,
Merlin says that the man may rise, if he chooses,
and seide to the abbot vntylle:
"he may arysen, 3if that he wylle,
For siknesse here ne feleth he non,
but that he may bothe rysen & gon.
and perto, abbot, to the J seye
that thike day whanne he schal deye,
and that he will break his neck, hang, and drown.
his nekke he schal breken vnto,
and an honged, and be spilt also.
Now Nedyth hym to feyne no more,
For his herte j knowe bothe here & thore."
thanne ros hym vpe this Jlke Barown,
The baron maintains that Merlin is a fool,
and seide pere to kyng Pendragown:
"Now mown 3e knowen his folye,
that seith on swich maner pat j scholde deye.

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For this knowe j wel, that may not be
of me ne of non othir man, Sikerle.
Now devise 3ow, Sire, Ryht wel,
how 3e this man leven ony del!"
thus thanne this werk gan to ende;
and jnto fer contre jt gan wende
how that *Mer*lyne gan to Say
on what deth he scholde dyen, jn fay.
So aftyr on a day not forthan
be-gan to ryde this good man,
and jn his compenye gret plente
Of his owne meyne, ful sykyrle.
So atte laste he cam to a ryver,
where as a brygge of tre was there,
and þervppon smot he his palfray,
that down on knes it fyl, jn fay.
So that he, whiche aboven was,
Fyl a-down there jn that plas,
and there his Nekke he brak vnto,
And as to the water he scholde han go,
So that his leg jn his Robe fastenyd there,
and alle his oþer lymes jn þe water were.
thanne weren there tweyne men Jn compenye,
herden how that *Mer*lyne gan seye;
Jn what man*er* he scholde ded be,
There they Rehersed, ful Sykerle.
thanne be-gan there an hidows cry
of alle his meyne, ful trewely;
whanne owt of the water they hadden him take,
For Sorwe they schoken & gonne to qwake.
thanne seiden they: "folys that they be
that *Mer*lyn ne leven not, Sykerle!"
they Beryeden the cors with hono*ur*.
and *Mer*lyn to the kyng kam thike same o*ur*,
and told bothen hym and to vter
how that *with* the barown it happede ther.
the kyng axede wha*n*ne it was, certeinle.
"*with*-jnne sixe dayes messe*n*geres scholen 3e se.
thanne kept j not to ben here,

and warns the king against him.

One day, this baron rides over a bridge.

The horse stumbles, the baron falls and breaks his neck, his leg is entangled in his robe, the other parts of his body come into the water.

Two men relate [leaf 103 *d*] Merlin's prediction. There is great wailing.

The corpse is buried. Merlin informs the king.

3910. *me* added above the line.

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For faste they welen of me enqwere
Merlin says he will avoid further queries,
of diuers maters, what so they be,
but answere geten they non, Sikerle,
For j wyle no more so openly seye,
that the peple schal vndirstonden, jn feye."
thanne wende the kyng þat he wroth were,
and þerfore weren ful sory there.
and goes off to Blasy.
So wente Merlyne to Blaysye anon,
and told him of these thynges echon,
and of þere, that to comen were;
jn this maner departyd Merlyne þere.

There dwellede Merlyne to þe vj day,
Those present at the baron's death arrive at court.
tyl the that at the deth weren, [comen], Jn fay,
and tolden the kyng how that it stood,
howhe þis barown was persched jn that flood,
Merlin's wisdom is fully acknowledged.
and seiden that Merlyne was þe wysest man
that Jn al this world was lyveng than.
For of hym was neuere thyng seid ne don,
but ȝif he jnto Scripture dide it putten anon.
and thus began Merlynes prophecye
of the kynges of Engelond, certeynlye,
and of othere many thynges also.
Blasy continues his book.
he dide holy Blasye it wryten tho.
thanne axede Blayse of Merlyne there:
" wryten they also jn this manere?"
" Nay, certeynly, non of hem alle,
At court, they write down
but they wryten that schal befalle,
which thynges they scholen Neuere knowe,
Tyl that they be-fallen vppon a rowe."
Thanne Retornede Merlyne to cowrt ageyn,
and ayens hym they comen, jn certeyn,
and tolden hym of that Jlke tydyng,
as thowg þere-offen he ne hadde knowen non thing.

Thanne sette on Merlyne and gan to telle
his dark prophecies.
Ful dyrke worrdes of prophecyes felle,
where-offen a book they maden anon.
thanne forth to the kyng Merlyne gan gon,

3959–60. MS. *xvj*, and *weren Jn*; in the right margin: *Nota*.

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and there to hem seyde he ful petowsly:
"J love 3oure bothe worschepis Badyly;
haven 3e not now vndirstondyng
of haugwys kynnes-men Exylyng,
that owt of this lond 3e deden don dryve,
aftyr that haugwys hadde left his lyve?"
"3is, this wele knowen we, Jn certeyn;
but for what cause do 3e this seyn?"
"J sey," quod Merlyne, "for this Enchesown,
That haugwys kynnes-men Everychon,
with-jnnen hem-Self they don thus speke,
that of haugwys deth they welen hem wreke.
So that they Maken gret congregacyown
of dyvers peple al abowtes Jn verown,
and hopen this lond forto conqwere
and Ek forto haven the victorye here."
thanne, whanne þe kyng herde this,
and also his Brothyr vter, j-wys,
Of these tydynges they *Mer*veylled Gretle,
And axeden Of *Mer*lyne Howh this Myhte be.
"haven they there so gret plente
Of Fensable peple Jn alle degre?"
"3e," quod Merlyne, "with-owten dowte,
they haven More peple hem abowte
thanne 3e owther 3owre brothyr, jn feye,
For a3ens on of 3owris they haven tweye;
and but 3if 3e werkyn Ryht wysly,
3e scholen ben discomfyt & stroyed, trewely."
"we scholen werkyn aftyr 3owre wylle,
what that Evere 3e welen seyn vs vntylle."
thanne axeden they *Mer*lyne anon there
whanne they scholden comen and jn what Manere.
"Atte the Elleveneth day, ful trewly;
but loke that 3e kepen this prevy,
and j defende 3ow, as J now kan,
that there-offen 3e ne tellen neuere Man.
but aftyr my cownseyl that 3e don,
and sendeth aftyr alle 3oure Men anon,
and that they ben here with-owten let

Merlin pitifully informs the king

that Augwis' kinsmen

will attack the country

[leaf 104 a]

with superior forces,

in eleven days. This, however, is to be kept a secret.

3993. MS. *fort this.*

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Merlin gives instructions with regard to the impending battle.

the laste wyke of the Mounthe of junet,
to assemblen vppon Salisbery pleyn
3owre Enemyes to withstondyn ageyn.
so that on of 3ow with half 3owre Meyne,
be-twixen hem and þe se scholen gon, Sykerle;
and so tweyne dayes 3e scholen abyde,
and on the thrydde to fyhten, what so betyde.
& 3if 3e thus wilen don, trewely,
J dar 3ow behoten the victory."

The brothers inquire if the battle will be fatal to either of them.

thanne seiden the bretheren to Merlyne there:
"Now, goode Merlyne, telle vs now here
3if ony of vs jn bataylle schal ded be."
thanne answeryd Merlyne: "ful Sykerle,
there nas Neuere thyng that hadde begynneng,
but of Necescite it Moste hauen Endyng,
Ne neuere Man owghte the deth drede,
3if he it Resceyue Jn tyme of Nede.

Merlin makes them swear, on their relics,

and therfore wolde J thanne," quod Merlyne,
"doth bryngen Me 3owre Relykes, þat ben so fyne,
and þer-vppon bothe scholen 3e swere
that 3e scholen don as j schal 3ow lere
bothen for 3owre prow and worschepe also,
and aftyr that schal j tellen 3ow Mo."
thus sworen they bothe at his Byddyng.
thanne anon seide Merlyne to the kyng:
"3e hauen sworen to Me, with-owten faylle,

to be true to God and themselves,

Trewe Men to be Jn this Batayllle
a3ens God and 3owre owne persone,
how so that Evere the game doth gone.
For to hym-Self May non Man trewe be,
but 3if to god he be trewe, Sykerle.
and that 3e confessen 3ow generally
Forto fyhten a3ens 3owre Enemy.

and promises them victory.

and aftyr mown 3e ben ful Sure
hem ouercomen bothe clene & pure,
for they beleven not on the Trenite.
And now herkene what j sey the:
Sethen holychirche cam jnto this lond,

4038. MS. *Mosten.* 4054. *to* added above the line.

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Swich a bataylle was non, as j vndirstond,
Neþer not schal ben be owre daye.
therfore, Syker, as j 3ow saye,
on of 3ow schal deyen jn this bataylle,
as j 3ow seye with-owten Faylle.
and þerfore that Ryaly 3e 3ow araye
Forto fyhten, as j 3ow saye,
and jn worschepe of the Trenyte,
For 3owre helpe syker wile he be;
And for his love arayeth 3ow wel
To his plesawnce Everydel!"
Lo, this Was Merlynes Cownsaylle,
As j 3ow sey wit-owten faylle.
these bretheren vndirstoden ful wel his sawe,
and of his cownseyl they weren Ryht fawe.
Anon thanne senten they thorwgh al here lond
For here Retenu, J vndirstond.
and whanne they weren asembled Everychon,
Grete 3iftes hadden they thanne anon,
and preyden Eche Man Jn his degre
that Redy and arayed he wolde be,
and jn the laste wyke of Jvnet,
on þe pleyn of Salisbery, with-owten let,
Next to the cost of the se,
that be hem þe Rem defendid Myhte be.
thus dwelden bothe bretheren jn Fere,
tyl the day of Somowns were comen there,
and kepten Merlynes comandement,
that he hem bothe bad, verament.
So that atte feste of pentecost
thyder they comen with here ost,
here Ryal cowrt to holden there
Fast by the se Jn here Manere.
and Manye grete 3iftes there 3oven they
To dewk, Erl, and to Barown, trewly.
and so longe abyden they on that grownde,
Tyl þat here Enemyes a-Ryvede Jn þat stownde.
thanne sente the kyng to prelates anon,

The battle, however, will be extraordinarily murderous, and one of the princes is to fall,

fighting in honour of the Trinity.

[leaf 104 *b*]

The princes cheerfully send for their men,

and ask them to be ready at the end of June, near Salisbury.

At Pentecost they hold court there,

till the enemy arrives.

4083. *of* added above the line.

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that they scholde comen Everichon
Forto confessen his peple Jn fere,
that they weren clene Jn alle Manere.
The entire army is confessed — and so thorwh the ost Everychon
they weren confessed thanne anon,
and eche to oþer forȝaf þere his Maltalent,
and absolved. and therto clene asoylled, verament.
thanne seide the kyng to Merlyne there
that tydynges he hadde of here powere,
and howh they weren aryved Echon,
alle his Enemyes, be on & be on.
thanne seide Merlyne to hym ageyn:
"that is ful trewe, jn certeyn!"
Merlin, on the king's question, repeats his former instructions, — thanne axede the kyng of Merlyne tho
Jn what Maner that he scholde do.
"ȝe scholen to Morwen senden ȝoure brothir vter
and half ȝoure Meyne to ben with hym ther.
and whanne ȝowre Enemyes ben owt of þe see,
thanne betwixen hem and þe water schal he be.
and thanne wilen they Resemblen anon
here jnto this contre forto gon.
and thus tweyne dayes schal he werken there,
adding that a dragon will appear in the air. — and þe thridde day jn the Eyr schal apere
a Red dragown, & þanne Mown ȝe fyhte
and the victorye to haven, j seye ȝow Ryhte."

The plan of operation thus settled, — To this cownseyl acordid ful wel
both pandragown an vter Everydel.
and ful gret joye bothen they Made,
and of this cownseil they weren ful glade.
thanne seide vter to Merlyne anon:
"Jnto tho partyes now wyle j gon."
"Loke that ȝe thanne ben a good knyht!"
and thus departyd they that Jlke Nyht.
Uter goes with half the army to cut off the enemy from the sea. — so that vter took forth his jorne,
and with hym half here Meyne.
so that be-twene þe see and his Enemyes he abod,
and with his Meyne thus forth he Rod.
thanne seide Merlyne: "abasche the non thyng
For deth ne bataylle, be my cownseyllyng!"

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And Whanne that Vter herde this, [leaf 104 c]
Ful mochel his herte was esyd, J-wys.
thanne wente *Mer*lyne Jnto North-humberlond — Merlin goes to Northumberland.
to Blaysye, his maistyr, as J vndirstond,
and let this putten Jnto Scripture
and many mo thynges, J 3ow ensure.
thanne rod vter with his meyne
aftyr *Mer*lynes cownseil, ful Sykerle,
and lay be-twene the Schepis & that ost,
whiche that they dredden most.
So lay Vter Stylle ryht there — Uter remains in his ambush for three days.
thre dayes Jn this manere,
and atte the Selve thrydde day — On the third day, the
the kyng remevyd, the sothe to say, — king's force advances.
and kam So Nyhe that meyne,
that eche of hem myht other se.
and whanne the ost beheld al this,
that on bothe sides they weren beset, j-wys,
and that to here Schipes they myhte not gon
with-owten bataylle of here fon,
thanne jn the eyr aperede that syht — and the dragon appears in the air.
that *Mer*lyne afore tyme hem tolde ful ryht,
of wheche Syhte the enemyes of the kyng
hadden gret drede, with-owten lesyng.
thanne seide the kyng to his meyne anon: — The king
"To armes and to hors let vs now gon,
and also Faste as we mown ryde,
vppon oure enemyes this Jlke tyde."
and whanne that vter Say the kyng so do, — and Uter attack from two sides,
anon *with* his meyne he remevede also,
that so on bothe sydes beset they were.
thanne began anon strong bataylle there
and gret occisiown on bothe syde,
and mochel peple ded at that tyde.
but haugwis kynnesmen hadden the werre, — and carry the day.
Not-withstondyng they comen from ferre.
but of this bataylle j reherse no more,
whiche of hem that best bar hym thore.

4172. *at that t* through correction, partly on erasure.

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The king falls with many barons,
but Pandragown the kyng was there ded,
and manye of his barowns in that sted.
thanne thus recordith this Storye,
that vter hadde there the victorye,

but of the enemies not one escapes.
and þat of his enemyes ne sckaped neuer on,
that ded they weren, other taken, echon.
thus endid the bataylle of Salisbery there,
where pandragown was slayn Jn this manere.

Uter succeeds his brother.
thanne hadde vter the rem Jn governaunce,
as was bothe resown, ryht, and chaunce.
thanne vter dide assemblen his meyne anon,
and let beryen his dede men Everichon,

After raising tomb-stones over the fallen,
and on every tombe wrot the name,
what he was, and of what fame.
but as towching his brothyr the kyng,
vppon his tombe made he non wrytyng.
For a gret Fool he is, with-owten dowte,
that a kynges tombe ne kan knowen with-owte,
For heyere and richere thanne ony oþer it was
that weren J-beryed Jn that plas.

he goes to Logres (London),
thanne remevid vter to Logres anon,
and with hym his prelacye everychon;

where he is crowned.
And there was he sacred and crowned kyng,
and of alle the rewm hadde he the governeng.
Thus was vter kyng of the Lond,
and alle homages resceyvede, J vndirstond.

Merlin, coming to court,
thanne the Fyftenethe day aftyr Sewenge
cometh merlyne to the cowrt of the kynge.
gret was the joye the kyng of hym made,
and alle the howshold of hym was glade.

[leaf 104 *d*]
tells Uter to adopt his brother's name, and to design a dragon like the one seen in the air,
Thanne seide merlyne to Vter there:
"thy brotheris name J wolde thou bere;
& benchesown of the dragown, J-wis,
that jn the eyr aperede, with-owten mys,
and aftyr thyke dragowns semblaunce,
J wolde thou madist on, with-owten variaunce."
This kyng let maken this dragown anon
of gold, also faste as it myhte be don,
and vppon a lawnce Jt Sette, Sanz faylle,

4209. *d* added in the left margin.

with hym to be born Jn bataylle.
thus was he clepyd vter Pendragown;
his brothir and þe baner was thenchesown.
thanne Merlyne with hym gan there dwelle,
and on a day to þe kyng gan he to spelle:
"why dost thou non More Reuerence
there thy brotheris body lyth jn precense?"
"what woldest thow, Merlyne, that j scholde do?
Sey what thow wylt, and it schal be so."
"Swich a thing to Maken, thow it attende,
that Scholde abyden with-owten Ende."
"Sey me thanne," quod the kyng ageyn,
"and j wele it don, Jn certeyn."
thanne quod Merlyne: "Sende thow anon
Jnto Erlond aftyr gret ston.
and j My-Self wile thedyr pase,
to schewen where they ben and jn what place,
and tellen hem wheche that they scholen brynge
Jn thi Schepis hider, with-owten lesynge."
thus the kyng schepis thedyr sente,
and Merlyne with hem was there presente.
"Sen ȝe now these stones here?
jn ȝoure Schepis j wolde they were."
and whanne these stones they gonne beholde,
jn here hertes they Merveylled Many folde,
and seiden that Nevere schipe hem myhten bere,
Ne neuere jnto here Schipe scholde comen there.
thanne tornede they thus hom a-geyn,
and of that Merveylle tolde the kyng, ful pleyn.
Anon thanne hem answeryd the kyng:
"Abydeth here stylle tyl Merlynes comeng!"

Thanne cam Merlyne to cowrt anon,
and of this the kyng told hym thusson.
thanne Made Merlyne his Surawnce
hem forto bryngen, with-owten variaunce.
and thus Merlyne thorwgh his craft,
tyl the stones weren there, he ne laft,
and leyde hem on the Sepulture

4216 to be borne with him in battle.
4220 Merlin advises the king to adorn Pendragon's tomb,
4224 for all ages,
4228 with huge stones from Ireland.
4232 Ships are sent.
4236 Merlin points out the stones,
4240 but the men find them too large,
4244 and return home without them.
4248 Then Merlin himself brings the stones.
4252

4237. MS. *Syen.*

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Of pandragown, J the ENSWRE.
The people are surprised at the size of the stones. thanne vter Pendragown with gret MEYNE
To the pleyn of Salisbery wente hem to se.
and whanne they beheld this grete MERVAYLLE,
thanne seide the peple, with-owten Faylle,
that alle the world hem ne cowde MEVE,
thowg that they scholden the sothe preve.
Merlin undertakes to raise them, thanne seide MERLYNE: "j schal hem dresse
MOCHEL bettere thanne they lyn, J-wysse."
"howh MYHTE that be?" quod the kyng anone,
"that MAY non MAN do but GOD alone."
thanne quod MERLYNE to hem anon:
sends away the people, "Goth 3e now hennes EVERYCHON,
and j schal hem dressen, as j have hyht,
oþer ellis my covenaunt held j not a-RYHT."
and performs the task. So that MERLYNE belefte there stylle,
and his covenawnt he dide fulfille.
Thanne cam MERLYNE to the kyng
as to a MAN þat he lovede with-owten feyneng,
Merlin then says to the king, he will reveal to him a great secret. and seide: "Sire kyng, herkeneth to ME!
j MOSTE to 3ow discure a gret prevyte,
on the prevyest that EVERE 3e knewe,
[leaf 106 a] And therfore to 3ow J Wele Jt Schewe,
Whiche schal ben ryht a strange thing,
as j 3ow say atte the begynneng;
and that 3e discure me to non lyveng MAN."
his axeng anon the kyng grauntid hym than.
"J wele that 3e vndirstonde me, ful pleyn:
He tells him the double source of his skill and divinatory power. Al the connenge that J have, certeyn,
onlych it cometh of the ENEMY;
and therto GOD, that is almyhty,
Wit and MEMORIE hath grauntid to ME
thynges that ben comeng to knowen, certeinle;
and be that Sovereyn vertw
the ENEMY hath lost, as j telle 3ow,
alle the part that he hadde jn ME,
thorwh goddis wille, sire, Sykerle.
Sire, now have 3e ful knowlechynge

4264. *do* added above the line. [4285. MS. *graũtdid.*
4274. *diſcure*, *re* (?) altered from *r'*. *gret*, *g* corrected from *p*.

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From whens that cometh al my konnenge.
Now j wele tellen the what Js goddis wylle,
and thow wylt herkene and lestene theretyille.
and whanne thou knowest of my menyng,
loke that thou Folwe it Jn werkyng.
Sire kyng, now vndirstonde thou me,
that god decendid from þe maieste
jn-to this erthe the Synneris to Save,
and for that he wolde here sowles have.
Also beleve wel that his sene he made
among his disciples to maken hem glade,
and þat he to hem seide Jn this manere:
'on of 3ow schal betraien me þat is here.'
Also, Sire kyng, vndirstonde thou me,
that moche povert and diseise suffrede he
of the jewes, and they falsly him Slowe
a3ens the lawe, with fals witnesse j-nowe,
and vppon the croys for vs he deyde.
thanne cam a knyht, as to-foren 3e herd seide,
and axed the body, For his gwerdown,
of hym that for vs hadde paid rawnsom.

Merlin further relates of Christ coming to earth to save sinners, of His supper with His disciples, of His death, and of Joseph, who buried His body.

Sire, aftyr that, he ros from ded
Jn scomfiture of the fowle qwed.
and happede aftyr his vp-rysyng,
this knyht with his sowdiours was walkyng
Jn a place of wast and desert,
and with hym many of his lignage, apert.
Sire, þere happede, a famyne cam hem vppon,
and to this knyht, here maister, they compleyned anon.
Anon thanne this knyht made his preyere
that god som Tokenyng wolde schewen hem þere,
the cause to suffren Swich deseise,
that he myhte it knowen, & it wolde him plese.
Anon thanne hadde he comandement
a table forto maken, verament,
jn mynde of þe table and of swete jesus,
at which he sat jn Symon lepres hows,

After the resurrection, this Joseph travelled with his retinue in a desert, his provisions ran short, and he prayed to God. He was commanded to make a table, in memory of the Lord's table,

4306. *povert*, *r* corrected from *p* rather indistinctly.
4313. In the right margin: *Nota*.

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to cover it with a cloth, and place thereon the holy vessel (St. Graal)

and that table to kouer*e*n (& not to lette)
with whit cloth, and þ*er*-vppo*n* þe holy vessel sette—
'and that the vessel be kouered also
wit*h* fair whit cloth, how so ꝥuer*e* ȝe do!'

which he, when in prison, had received as a comfort from God.

whiche vessel browhte the kyng of blys
To this knyht jnto presown, j-wys,
where as he was two and fowrty ȝer,
whiche vessel al his hol comfort was ther,
and be this vessel departyd he
the goode from the ꝥvel, ful sikerle.

A void place was left at the table,

and, Sir*e*, at this Table ꝥvere there was
Jn ꝑemorie of crist kept a voide plas,

to signify the place once occupied by Judas.

whiche specyal place doth Signefye
the place that judas jn Sat, trewelye,
which he Forsook, whanne god hadde sayd:
'on of ȝow hath me betrayed
that with me here doth drynke and ꝥte.'
(Jt hadde ben bettere he dyde it lete.)

[leaf 105 b]

So Was this place there voyde stylle,

Just as that place was afterwards filled by St. Matthew,

tyl that aftyr-ward be goddis wylle
anothir, hyht ꝑathy, was there-jne j-set,
as to hym there Jt cam ꝥe lot,
and to fulfille þe nombre of þe postelis twelve,
for thus wold ꝺod it scholde ben him-selve.
and, Sire, this voyde place þ*at* at þe [table] Is,
Signefieth be josep*e*, Sire, j-wis;
and lik as ꝑaththy was chosen therto,

thus Joseph here took the empty seat.

ꝥiht so was josep*e*, wit-owten ꝑo,
So that these tweyne tables covenable were,
and thus pleside crist ꝑennes hertes there.
Sire, this peple clepede this ꝥessel
'the Sank Ryal' o*þer* ellys 'Seint Graal.'

Now the king is exhorted to make a third table.

And, sir*e*, ȝif ȝe welen don aftyr ꝑe,
the thrydde table, jn worschepe of þe Trenite,
ȝe scholen be-gynne, as j ȝow schal Say,
and ȝow to gret worschepe it schal torne ꝥche day,
and to ȝour*e* Sowle gret ꝑede also,
and ꝑanye benfettes ȝow schal comen to,
and thorwgh this world this word schal springe,

4353. MS. þe *Is.*

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as j 3ow Seye with-owten lesenge."
Lo, thus Spak *Mer*lyne to the kyng,
whiche wordis to hym were gret lykyng.
thanne seide the kyng to *Mer*lyne ageyn:
"J nolde for non thing, Jn certein,
that god non thing ne loste be me
whiche that to his plesaunce myhte be.
wherfore, *Mer*lyne, ordeyne as thow wylt,
For vppon me ne schal not lyn the gylt."
"Now," thanne quod *Mer*lyne to the kyng,
"where liketh 3ow best to ben abydyng?"
"Now certes," quod the kyng ageyn,
"where þou wilt it ordeynen, jn certeyn,
and where that most plesyng it myhte be
To God, that Syt anhyghe jn maieste."
thanne answerede Merlyne, *þat* was ful lel:
"jn wales, atte þe town of Cardweille,
and there schalt thou holden thy feste
atte pentecost bothe to mest and leste.
and forth to-foren, Sire, wyl j gon
that Table to ordeynen for 3ow echon;
and also hem that there schal Sytte,
j wile hem ordeynen, that thow it wyte."

The king is much pleased,

and leaves the arrangements in Merlin's hands.

Merlin chooses the town of Cardweil in Wales; there a great feast is to be held at Pentecost.

Chap. IV.

Ryht as *Mer*lyne devisede jn alle thing,
riht so aftyr hym evene wrowht þe kyng,
and there anon Sente *pro*clamaciown
be messengeris thorwgh-owt his regyown,
his ryals hym to mete*n*, bothe lest and meste,
In cardwel atte pentecost Feste;
thus was the kynges proclamaciown.
And *þanne* from the kyng departyd *Mer*lyne anon,
and wente to ordeyne that behoven Scholde
To that Table bothe for 3ong and olde.
and the woke to-Foren pentecost
Thedyr cam the kyng, as he nedis most,
and axede of Merlyne how he hadde j-do.
he seide: "Sire, riht wel 3it hyderto!"
"hast thow owht ordeyned whiche schole*n* sitten here?"

Messengers are sent out.

Merlin goes in advance to the place to arrange the table.

The king follows.

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"ȝe, sire, to Morwen scholen ȝe sen the Manere
Merlin promises the king an unexpected sight. and that ȝe wenden neuere forto han seye:
Fyfty worthy knyhtes, Sire, jn feye,
of the beste that ben with-jnne thi lond,
certein j do ȝow to vndyrstond.
and þerby myht thou knowen thy worthy men,
that j have chosen be fyve sithes ten.
Also the voide place þere schalt thou se,
that ȝit fulfyld it may not be."
[leaf 105 c] Thus Merlyne at that Ryal Feste
He chooses fifty knights, ches there Fyfty knyhtes of the beste,
and places them round the table. and preide hem to Sitten al jn Fere
and there to Eten with Ryht good chere.
Ryht so they deden be on an on,
and Glad they weren Everychon.
thanne Merlyne, that was so ful of Craft,
abowtes he wente, and not ne laft,
Then he calls the king, and shows him the knights and the empty seat. and clepid the kyng there forto se
how that they Seten Jn here degre,
and schewed him also the voide place
that thike tyme atte the table wase.
but what that place dide signifie,
Niste þe kyng ne non of his compenye.

And whanne Merlyne thus hadde j-don,
The king joins the party; he preyde the kyng to sitten anon.
the feast is continued for a week; and thus viij dayes contenued þe feste Ryal
To lordes and ladyes and damyselis with-al;
handsome presents are given. and there ful grete ȝiftes ȝaf the kyng
bothe to lordis and to ladyes and to damyselis so ȝyng.
and whanne this feste gan vp to breke,
thanne to þe Fyfty knyhtes þe kyng gan to Reke,
and axede how hem likede there,
and of here Syttyng jn alle Manere.
The knights say they would like to stay for ever, in brotherly love. thanne they the kyng answerid ful sone:
"Jt Js owre wylle Neuere hens to Gone
Neþer Neuere to parten oure compeny onsondyr,
For so as we loven to-gederis, it is gret wondir,

4414. *fulfyld*, *d* squeezed in afterwards.
4429. *whāne* added above the line.

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For as bretheren we loven to-gederis jn fere,
and, tyl deth vs sondre, neuere to departen ere."
And whanne the kyng herde this,
gret merveille he hadde þer-offen, j-wys.
thanne charged the kyng to hem anon
to hym ben loveng and trewe everychon.
thanne departyd al this compenye,
eche man to his own contre, trewelye.
thanne cam the kyng to merlyne there,
and axede him thanne jn this manere:
"Telle me ȝif that goddis wylle jt be
this Table fulfylled that J schal se?"
"wyte thow wel certeyn, Sire kyng,
that jn thy tyme it schal neuere haven endyng,
Nethyr he that jt schal fulfylle,
js not ȝit be-geten, j sey the tylle.
but jn the kynges tyme jt schal be-falle
that aftyr the schal regnen in pured & palle;
and he that hym begeten schal,
knoweth not what aventure him schal befal.
and that same that is to be bore,
Schal fulfillen the place thore,
lyk as josepe dide jn his manere
the Signefiaunce aftyr maththy there.
and þerfore, Sire, j preye to the
thy festes here to holden, certeinle."
"Now certes, merlyne," quod the kyng tho,
"and at thy wille it schal be do."
thanne seide merlyne to the kyng:
"Sire, it is tyme to maken a partyng;
and knowe ȝe wel now, syre kyng,
that aftyr myn hens departyng
of a long tyme ȝe schole not me se,
J Seye ȝou, Sire kyng, ful certeinle."
thanne axede the kyng of hym aȝe
whethir at his festes he wolde not be.
thanne answerede merlyne jn this manere:
"Atte alle tyme j may not ben here."

The king wonders at this;

he exhorts them to be loving and true.

The king asks Merlin about the void seat.

Merlin replies: "It shall not be filled in thy time; its occupier is not yet begotten.

Continue thy feasts here!"

Merlin takes leave,

and says he will not be back for a long time.

4468. *thy*, *y* corrected from *e*; cf. l. 4604.
4473. *now* added above the line.

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Merlin repairs to Blasy.

Thanne wente Merlyne to blasye anon,
and þe establemen*tes* of þe table told hym Echon
and of other thynges Manye also
[leaf 105 *d*] That At thyke tyme Were to comen tho. 4484
and there dwelde Merlyne two 3er stylle,
that the kynges cowrt he Nolde comen tylle.

In Cardwell, some courtiers murmur at the seat being left empty.

So happede it at Cardweille vppon a day
that they whiche lovede not Merlyne, gonne to say, 4488
and axeden a qwestiown of the kyng:
why that place was voyde of syttyng,
and why that som good Man Mihte [not] sytten there,
and thanne the table fulfilled were. 4492

The king tells them of Merlin's prediction;

thanne answeryd the kyng: "certeynle,
For a gret Merveyl that Merlyne tolde Me,
that it scholde Nevere ben be My day,
and thus Merlyne to Me gan say. 4496
and 3it he that him Engendren schal,
Nys not 3it born, More with-al,
that this table schal fulfylle."

but they scoffingly declare, that there are as good men to be found now as ever will be,

they lawhen wel faste, as men þat weren jlle. 4500
"Sire, beleve 3e thanne that jn tyme comenge
þat better Men scholen ben thanne be now reignenge,
and that jn 3owre lond [not] as goode there be
as Evere here-aftyr scholen comen, sikerle?" 4504
"Now certes, j wot Neuere," quod the kyng.

and urge the king to let them try the seat.

"No[w] we reden 3ow to putten jt jn asayeng."
"Certes," quod the kyng, "j drede me þanne sore
that Merlyne wolde ben angry there-fore." 4508
"Sire, thanne, and 3e wylen 3yven vs leve,
his Falsnesse forsothe we scholen preve."

After some hesitation,

"and j wiste Merlyne wroth wolde not be,
wel fayn wolde j asayen it, ful sykerle." 4512
"3e, Sire, 3if that Merlyne know of this,
Siker, there wile he ben, j-wys;
and þerfore suffreth vs forto asaye,
Now, goode Sire kyng, alle we 3ow praye." 4516

the king gives his consent.

So that the kyng hem graunted it forto do,
whanne that the feste cam therto.

4482. *hym*, MS. *hem*.
4491, 4503. The negation is missing. 4506. MS. *No*.

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thanne weren they glad Everichon
that þe kyng hadde graunted þis thing be don.
and thus it Taryede jn-to pentecost feste,
that eche Ryal þere to be atte the kynges heste.
and Merlyne, that knew here thowhtes Echon,
Ryht there to Blayse told jt anon,
and of alle here jlle thenkenge,
and of hem þat weren þer-offen þe begynnenge.
and he wiste wel that provyd jt scholde be,
that jlke place, ful certeynle;
and sethen algates it scholde ben so,
bettere on a schrewe thanne on a good Man to proven it tho.
and thus Merlyne dwelled þere stylle
jnto qwynʒyme of pentecost, here wil to fulfille.

Merlin knows of the courtiers' intentions,

but does nothing to prevent them.

Thanne the kyng to Cardweille wente,
and with hym Many lordis, veramente.
and they that comen to asayen this place,
Seiden there was fallen a wondyr case:
that a fals wood cherl, jn certayn,
Jn a wode goode Merlyne hadde slayn.
and thus so styfly they gonnen it say,
that the kyng belevyd it that day,
and More principaly the More for on thing:
be Encheson of Merlynes longe abydyng;
and also More thanne Supposed the kynge
þat he wolde it not were asayed, Merlyne levynge.

A rumour is spread that Merlin has been slain.

The king believes it, particularly as Merlin does not appear.

thanne vppon the Even of pentecost
there was þe semblance, as Nedes Most.
thanne axede the kyng of hem anon
ho that place asayen scholde don.
thanne he that the place assaien wolde,
Seide þere to the kyng with wordis bolde:
"Sire, j have begonnen this jlke thing,
and non but j ne schal have the asayeng."
Thanne cam he to the table anon

On the eve of Pentecost,

the courtier appointed

goes to the table.

4531. *dwelled*, *w* corrected from *e*.
4544. After this line there follows, written up the margin: *for to þ^e^ peple it ſcholde ben agroſche*(?). The end is daubed and indistinct.

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[leaf 106 a] There the fyfty knyhtes Seten Echon.
" J am comen forto Sitten here
Forto beren ȝow compenye al jn fere."
The intruder is met with silence. and they to hym Seiden neuer a word,
but humblely stille seten at that bord,
and behelden what that he wolde do,
and so dyde the kyng and Manyon Mo.
He has scarcely taken the seat, thanne thussone he hym sette adown
amongȝes al that peple there jn virown.
and assone as he was set jn that sted,
when he sinks down lifeless he Sank a-down lik a plom of led.
Ne non Man wyste how it cam to,
Neþer why he Suffrede that deth ful wo,
and disappears. Ne where his body becomen was,
there wiste no Man jn that plas.
thanne comanded the kyng anon
To thyke worthy men Everychon
All rise. that anon they scholden vp Ryse,
and so they dyden jn hasty wyse,
and Merveillously astoned this cowrt thanne was,
and also the kyng Most jn that plas.
thus thanne taryede there the kyng
A fortnight later, tyl Fyftene dayes aftyr, with-owten leseng.
Merlin comes to court. and be that tyme Merlyne to cowrt was gon,
Of hos comenge weren glad Manyon,
and specyaly aboven alle othere the kyng,
that aȝens Merlyne wente jn Metyng.
Anon as Merlyne the kyng gan beholde,
these same wordis to hym he tolde:
He reproves the king. "certeyn, ȝe haven Ryht Evele j-do
ony Man jn þat place to suffren sitten so!"
"Now sikerly, Merlyne," quod the kyng,
The king excuses himself. "they jt deden and Me begyleng."
"certis," quod Merlyne to the kyng than,
"Ryht so it fareth be Manye a Man.
ho that often desireth to be-gylen anothyr,
atte laste on him-self falleth the fothyr.
and that, Sire kyng, myht thou proven here
vppon this Man jn alle Manere."
thanne aftyrward preide the kyng Merlyne,

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that was his owne and worthy devyn,
where that man were, and how be hym it felle,
he preide that *Mer*lyne hym wolde telle.
thanne answerede *Mer*lyne to him ryht there:
"what nedeth the aftyr hym enqwere?
For thowh thou wistest howh *with* hym it stood,
Jt scholde don the but litel good.
but thenke on hem that there don Sytte,
and how that thow schalt wel meynteyne jtte
and othir thynges that belongen to the,
thy cowrt, thy festes, and thy meyne,
that thou hast begonne*n* jn this town.
Now myht þou se, the table js of renown,
of renown and of dignete gret;
here sixt þou proved, and thow wilt wet.
Now, sire kyng, from the wyl j gon,
loke thou kepe wel these thynges echon,
and that thow do aftyr myn cownsaille,
for j suppose it wyle the somwhat avaylle."

The king asks Merlin what has become of the dead courtier.

Merlin gives him no satisfaction on this point;

he tells him rather to mind his people and his feasts,

and follow Merlin's instructions.

Thus departyd *Mer*lyne from the kyng tho,
and jnto othir contres gan forto go.
thanne the kyng, where he scholde holden his feste,
Faire howses let he maken aftyr his heste.
Thanne dede proclame the kyng anon
alle these festes, everichon,
that eche man at Cardwel scholde be
atte these festes as ȝe scholen se:
that is, at the feste of cristemasse,
esterne, & pentecost, as j gesse,
and þe feste of alle halwen also,
To Cardweylle they scholde comen to.
so that jt happede atte a cristemasse feste,
the kyng Somownd his barowns, bothe lest & meste,
and warned hem Jn this manere,
that eche lady *with* hire lord scholde ben there,
here dowhtres, here Sostren, here neceȝ also,
to Cardweille jn Gales scholden alle go,

Merlin departs.

The king erects fine buildings at Cardwell,

and appoints general festivals to be held there regularly.

at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and All Saints' Day.

[leaf 106 *b*]

One Christmas, the ladies are also invited to the feast.

4599. *thou*, MS. *the*.

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and also bothe knyhtes and bachelere,
jn alle wises they scholden ben there.

Amongst others, Jt were to longe here Names to telle,
but of certeyn persones j schal ȝow spelle.

there appear the duke of Tyndagel and his wife Ygwern. there was the dewk of tyndagel
and ygwerne, his wyf, that he loved ful wel,
where-offen spekyth this storye,
and a-forn oþere putteth it jn Memorye.

The king at once falls in love with Ygwern. Anon the kyng his love there sette
(Myht no Man womman loven bette),
and cow[n]tenance to hire Made he non,
but hire beheld Most of Echon.

She notices it, so atte laste sche gan aspye
that the kyng hire lovede prevylye,
as sche gan aspyen be his chere.

and avoids him. and þerfore sche schoned aforn him to comen there,
For sche was bothe good and fayr, trewly,
and loved God and hire lord Sovereynly.

The king distributes costly presents; and the kyng, for love of this lady fre,
ȝiftes abowtes sente, ful gret plente
of jewelys and Many oþer preciows thynges,
Nowches, and broches, and Manye Riche Rynges.

to Ygwern he sends a precious jewel, and to Ygwerne he sente a precyows jwel,
that he supposede scholde plesen here wel.
and sche sawh that to alle other ladyes he sente,

which she dare not refuse. So dorste sche not Refwsen his presente.
and in hire herte this lady gan to Remene
that for hire love he dyde jt ful clene,
and that sche scholde his ȝifte Receyve,
that from his love sche scholde not weyve.

Thus the kyng there held his Festis
with Ryalte, Mynstrales, and Many gestis.
and algates he was with-owten wyf,
and thus jn love Morneng he ledde his lyf.

The enamoured prince, For so was he set jn love of ygwerne,
that from loves dart non Man myht hym werne.

4641. MS. *covtenance.* 4648. *hir'* corrected from *his.*
4653. MS. *yGwerne, G* corrected from *w.*
4666. *lovef, f* inserted afterwards.

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thus thanne vp Brak this Ryal feste,
and þere the kyng preide both lest & meste
that at Cardweille they scholden alle be
atte the feste of Esterne, jn that cyte,
and also alle the ladyes there Everychon;
thanne they hym graunted Ryht anon.
and whanne the dewk of tyndagel departed thenne,
the kyng hym conveyed with manye of his menne,
and hym dide bothe worschepe and honour,
& ek to that lady that jn his Eye was flowr.
and so of hem his leve there he took,
(but Evere for love his herte sore qwook),
and torned aȝen, with-owten fable,
To the fyfty knyhtes of his Rownde table,
and axede hem leve, and wente his way,
and betawht hem god and many good day.
that so wente he forth Jn his jorne,
tyl the Feste of Esterne cam aȝe.

at the end of the feast, orders all to come back by Easter;

he sees the duke and duchess off with great honour,

and takes leave of the knights of the Round Table.

So that at the feste of pask anon thanne
at cardweille assembled manye a manne;
of ladyes, of damyseles, and other meyne
J wot there was Ful gret plente.
and mochel joye there-offe made þe kyng,
whanne þat he say thike fayre assemblyng.
and at the feste he wolde not werne,
but the dewk hym to-forn and his wyf ygwerne.
So that be His ȝyftes and His Entent,
sche wyste he hire lovede, verament.
so in gret thowht was that lady fre,
but al sche suffrede, as Nedis it moste be.
and thus with gret ioie contenwed this feste
to alle tho Ryales, bothe lest and meste:
and whanne this feste was j-do,
Eche lord took his leve hom to go.
and the kyng hem preide ouer alle thyng
to comen aȝen at his Sendyng.
and they grauntyd hym Everichon
that his comandement scholde be don.

At Easter, all meet again;

and the king shows his love as before.

[leaf 106 c]

At the break-up, he requests them to return at his summons.

4697. *ioie* added above the line.

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thus departyd this cowrt thanne,
and the kyng there lefte an hevy manne.
The king spends a year in yearning. so al that 3er jn angwysch lyved he
for Ygwernes love, ful syker 3e be.
and whanne it cam to thende of the 3ere,
he compleyned hym of his angwysch þere,
that certeyn, for the love of ygwerne,
no man to morne ne myhte hym werne.
His privy council advise him thanne answerid his prevy cownseyl ageyn :
" what wil 3e þat we do, telle vs now pleyn ! "
" j wyle that 3e wolden me rede
how that of hire J myhte spede."
thanne seiden they to the kyng anon :
not to go into Ygwern's country, " 3if 3e owht jnto that contre gon,
anon discured scholen 3e be,
and þat were non worschepe to 3ow, Sykerle."
" cownseilleth me thanne what j schal do ! "
and they to the kyng thus answerede vnto :
" the beste cownseyl Js, that we can,
but to have a feast again at Cardwell, that 3e don Somowne every man
to ben at cardweille atte 3owre feste,
and here ladyes, bothe lest and meste,
and that xv dayes it schal laste,
that eche schal abyde, tyl that be paste,
and so with-jnne thike xv dayes
and there enjoy Ygwern's society. with ygwerne mown 3e haven bothe dalyaunce & playes."
this cownseille plesid ful wel the kyng,
and he dyde aftyr here cownseilleng.
So thanne sente the kyng messengeris anon
To alle his Barowns thanne, everychon,
At Pentecost, the nobility assemble, at Pentecost at cardweille forto be,
eche Barown and his lady so fre.
So comen they thedyr everychon
the kynges comaundement forto don.
and the king bears his crown throughout the feast. At that Feste the kyng Bar corowne
jn chirche, jn paleys, jn feld and towne.
and grete 3iftes 3af the kyng, certeinle,
bothe to lordis and ladyes, aftyr here degre.

4707. *lyved*, *y* corrected from *e*.
4713. *cownseyl*, *l* squeezed in afterwards.

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At that Feste ful joyful was the kyng,
whanne that he Sawh that Fayre assemblyng.
So that he clepede on of his olde cownseiller,
that ful mochel he trusted jn ther,
hos name vlphyn thanne was,
that the kyng clepede jn that plas,
and axede of hym how that he scholde do
for Ygwernes love, that wrowht hym wo—
"that nethyr Sleping ne wakyng non reste, certeyne!
So that hire love doth me distreyne,
and but j haue the bettere cownsaille,
j am Siker to deyen, with-owten faylle."
thanne spak vlphyn, and lette for non schame:
"Now Sekerly, Sire, ȝe ben to blame,
that for a wommans love wenen to deye!
and it were to me ward, Sire, be my feye,
as pore man as J am here on,
and j lovede so as ȝe now don,
j wolde neuere deyen for hire Sake,
but som othir menes thanne wolde j make,
owthyr with faire speche or ȝiftes grete,
With dalyaunce, and With love hyre threte,
and to hem that ben hire abowte
gret ȝiftes to ȝyven, al that rowte.
and aȝens this maner of werkyng
herde j neuere wommans cownterpletyng.
and thou thy-self that art a kyng,
wherto makyst thou al this morneng?"
thanne spak the kyng to vlphyn ageyn:
"thou seist wondirly wel, jn certeyn,
and therto thow knowest what longeth þerto
Swich maner of werkynge forto do.
and þerfore, vlphyn, J the preye,
helpe what þou canst be ony weye,
and to my cofres thou go anon,
& ches what jewelis þou wilt amonges hem echon,
and ȝeve to hem that ben hire abowtes there,
of hire that j myhte haven the better chere."
"Now resteth, Sire," quod vlphyn tho,
"and al my deligence j wele now do."

The king asks the advice of his confidant, Ulfin (cf. l. 3709),

with regard to his love-affair.

Ulfin encourages the king,

recommending fair words [leaf 106*d*] and great presents,

which no woman can resist.

The king charges Ulfin to distribute jewels.

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thus vndirtook Sire vlphynes there
to helpen the kyng aftyr his powere.
The king lives in joy and bounty. thanne was the kyng joyful jn þat stede,
For wel he hopede that vlphyn scholde spede.
and so that alle thike xv dayes
the kyng made gret joye and many playes,
and algates the dewk jn his compenye,
and many grete jewelis 3af he, Sekerlye.
Ulfin brings Ygwern many a costly jewel. thanne jn this mene whille also
vlphyn to ygwerne spak vnto,
and manye a riche jewel he hire browhte,
whiche þat hire best scholde plesen him thowhte.
The lady refuses the gifts, but ygwerne resceyvede non of al this,
For why he it dede, wel thowhte sche, j-wys.
so that jt happede vppon a day
that ygwerne to vlphyn thus gan say:
and remonstrates. "sey, vlphyn, what Js the cause and why
Swiche 3iftes me to profren so prevyly?"
Ulfin praises her high qualities, "Lady, for 3owre bewte and 3owre semblance,
For 3owre discresciown and good dalyawnce,
For 3owre hyghe wyt and 3owre bownte,
alle these Londis goodis, 3owre they be,
and alle mennes persones to 3ow scholen obeye
as to here owne Sovereyn lady, Sekerlye."
"how myhte this be," quod Ygwerne thanne,
"that to me scholde obeye so manye a manne?"
and tells her that she possesses the king's heart. "For his herte haven 3e al only
to whom alle men scholen obeien lowly."
"O Lord god, ho may that be?
j preye the, vlphyn, telle þou now me!"
"the kynges herte," seide vlphyn than.
Ygwern condemns the king. Anon to blessen sche hire be-gan,
and seyde: "how longe hath the kyng a tretour be,
that my lord So worschepith to-forn me,
and me wolde don so fowl a schame,
and þerto bryngen me jnto endeles blame?
Therfore, sire vlphyn, j warne the,

4784. *hif*, *f* through correction.
4809. *al* added above the line.
4813. *than*, *a* rendered distincter afterwards.

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that neuere more swich wordis þou speke to me.
and 3if thow it evere do, jn certeyn,
j schal jt tellen my lord, ful pleyn.
And 3if there-offen he knowe, trewlye,
Ful Syker thou be that thow schalt deye!"
thanne answerede Sire vlphyn ageyn:
"that were non resown, jn certeyn,
that j so for my lord Scholde now deye.
Now 3e ben to blamen, ful trewelye,
that 3e refusen so ryal a thyng,
to haven bothe the love and þe herte of a kyng,
that so 3ow loveth aboven alle erthly creature,
So whethir to lyven oþer deyen he not, j 3ow enswre,
but lyveth jn hope as a woful manne."
"3e gabben," quod Ygwerne to vlphyn thanne.
"Nay, but that 3e wele now mercy have
Vppon 3owre Kyng, And 3owre-self to save.
and but 3e don as j 3ow here say,
gret deseise may fallen with-jnne schort day.
For Nethyr 3owre lord ne 3e ne mowen non thyng
withstonden a3ens the wylle of the kyng."
thanne seide Ygwerne and answered ageyn,
Ful sore wepynge thanne, jn certeyn:
"3if j mowe, j schal me defende,
j schal him Neuere sen, thowh he for me sende!"

Ygwern threatens to tell her husband.

Ulfin perseveres,

emphasizing the king's love and longing,

[leaf 107 *a*]

and the danger and uselessness of resistance.

Ygwern weepingly says she will defend herself.

Thus departyd they thanne anon,
and Sire vlphyn to the kyng is gon,
and tolde the kyng every word thanne.
þe kyng seide: "sche answerede as a good wommanne!
Neuertheles, vlphyn, 3it not thow leve,
For a good womman hire-self wyle preve
and not so sone ouercomen to be;
3it forto assayen j preye to the."
So it happede that on the xj day
aftyr pentecost, as j 3ow say,
the kyng at his mete sat ful lel,
and with hym the dewk of tyndagel.

Ulfin tells the king,

who commends the lady's virtue.

Some time after, the king sits at table with the duke.

4853. *the*, *h* corrected from *e*.

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a ful Riche cowpe stood to-fore the kyng,
Ulfin kneeling before the king, suggests that he should send a gold cup to Ygwern. and vlphyn, that was to-forn him knelyng:
"Syre, take ȝe this cuppe & sende Ygwerne,
and for ȝowre loue to drynken let hire not werne. 4860
preye ȝe the dewk jt Myhte so be,
and as hire owne stille it to kepen for the."
The king speaks to the duke, thanne to this dewk spak the kyng,
and him preyde to fulfillen his askyng, 4864
that he wolde that cowpe to ygwerne sende—
"and for my love to drynken, and me hauen jn Mende;
and that sche the cowpe kepe now stylle,
to don ther-with at hire owne wylle." 4868
who unsuspectingly and gratefully tells his confidant Bretel thanne answerede that worthy Manne,
that non Maner of Evel thowhte he thanne,
and clepyd a knyht, that him stood besyde,
that with hym was prevy jn Eche tyde: 4872
to take the cup to Ygwern. "Tak ȝe this cowpe here Ryht anon,
and to ȝowre lady there-with ȝe gon,
and seyth to hire on this Manere,
that sche here-offen drynke *with* ryht good chere, 4876
hertylich for love of the kyng,
and the cowpe to kepen to hire weldyng."
Bretel goes, This knyht Bretel wyth þe cowpe wente ful softe,
and the dewk the kyng there-offen thankyde ofte. 4880
Forth this Bretel to chambre gan gon,
There as these ladyes Eten Everychon,
and delivers the duke's message. and toforn his lady he knelyd a-down,
as to a worthy lady of Renown. 4884
"Lady, this cowpe ȝow sendeth the kyng,
and my Lord ȝow comandeth ou*er* alle thing
For the kynges love to drynken *with* good chere,
and stille þe cowpe to kepen jn fair Manere." 4888

Ygwern grows red for shame, but drinks out of the cup. Whanne this lady these wordis herde,
ful Red sche wax, and aschamed sche ferde,
and dorste not Refusen hire lordis byddyng, 4891
and drank of this cowpe, and wolde han sent it the kyng.
thanne seide Bretel to that lady fre:

4860. *loue* added afterwards above the line.
4879. *wyth*, *y* corrected from *e*.

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" stille it to kepen my lord comanded the,
and so the kyng hym faire preide,
þerfore doth ȝe as j have ȝow seyde!"
thanne say this lady þat for good ne ylle
but that thike cowpe sche moste kepen stylle.
and Bretel aȝen to halle was goeng,
and on Ygwernes be-halve thankyd þe kyng,
Not-withstondyng sche seide non word
To Bretel, whiles sche sat atte bord.
Ful mochel joye made the kyng tho,
that ygwerne his cowpe resceyved so.
thanne vlphyn anon to chambre þe weye gon take,
To sen what semblaunce Ygwerne dide make.
And þere He Fond Hyre jn pensyfnesse,
angry of chere, and ful of hevynesse.
and whanne the tables j-drawen were,
anon cleped sche vlphyn to hire there,
and Seide: " be tresown thy lord the kyng
me a cowpe hath sent, aȝens my willyng,
but lytel wynnenge to hym schal jt be,
For my lord j wele it tellen, Sykerle,
what tresown that the kyng and ȝe
han purchased aȝens my lord & me!"
thanne answerid here vlphyn ageyn:
" beth wel war what ȝe don Seyn!"
thanne answerede this lady fre:
" blame haue he þat spare for hym oþer the
that j ne schal tellen, every word,
the tresown of the and of thy lord!"
Thens vlphynes departyd, and cam to halle,
There as weren these lordis alle.
the kyng hadde whaschen and þe bord j-drawe,
and jn herte was the kyng bothen joyful and fawe,
and took the dewk be the hond anon:
" Sire, jnto chambre now lete vs gon
and sen the chere of these ladyes gent."
" J graunte," quod the dewk, " Sire, verament."
thanne wente the kyng & þe dewk anon,
there as Ygwerne et, þei comen thussone.
thanne wiste ygwerne ful witterly

Ygwern is requested to keep the cup.

Bretel returns to the king and thanks him on Ygwern's behalf, although she has said nothing.

The king is delighted.

Ulfin goes to see Ygwern, whom he finds angry [leaf 107 *b*] and sad.

She complains of treason, and declares she will inform her husband.

Ulfin tells her to beware,

but cannot deter her.

The king, after his meal, goes with the duke to the ladies' room.

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Ygwern knows it is for her sake.

that for here jt was only.
so this sche suffrede al that day
with sorweful herte and sore afray.

At night, Ygwern retires, weepingly, to her lodginge.

So that at Nyht to hire ostel sche wente
with hevy chere and wepyng, veramente.
and whanne the dewk Sawh hire of that chere,
he axede hire what that hire Eylede there,
and Embraccde hire jn his armes two,
and axede hire what the cawse was tho.

She tells her husband

"Forsothe to 3ow non thing wyl j hele,
but j schal tellen 3ow Everydele
as to my lord that j love Most of alle thing
aboven alle creatures jn Erthe leveng.

of the king's love,

here js the kyng, My lord and 3owre,
he loveth Mé with gret dishono*ure*.
For alle these cowrtes, and this feste,
and þe sonde of these ladyes, bothe lest and Meste,
js not for non thing but only for Me,
that j with 3ow scholde come*n*, Sykerle.

his many presents,

thus Many 3iftes he hath Me sente,
and j Non Resceyved, verament.
and thus be bretel 3e sente Me to say

the ruse with the cup,

the cowpe þat j scholde Resceyve this day,
and that for his love drynken J scholde,
and aftyr to kepen the cuppe of goolde,
that Syker j hadde as leef ded forto haue be
as jt han Resceyved so, Sykerle.

and her constant annoyance.

and what for hym and fore vlphyn
j May non Reste haven, sou*ereyn* Myn!"
"Thanne se j be 3oure wordis here,
with-owte*n* velonye to remeve, a Maistrye it were."

She begs to be taken home to Tyndagel.

"3e, worthy sovereyn, j preye to the
To tyndagel that 3e wolde*n* leden Me,
and jn this place no*n* lengere abyden here,
but jn owre owne lordschepe þat we were!"

The irate duke sends for his men,

and whanne the dewk herde al this,
ano*n* ful wroth he was, j-wys,
and sente aftyr his knyhtes faste,
that to hym they scholde come*n* jn haste.
and whanne to hym they were comen Echon,

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To hem thanne seide the dewk anon:
"Retorne 3ow faste forto Ryde,
and þat non man þere-offen wyte this tyde,
Neþer axeth not of me the cawse why,
for j schal 3ow it tellen ful pleynly.",
thus the dewk with his meyne
jnto his contre ladde his lady fre.

gives orders for a sudden and secret departure,

and returns to his own country.

[leaf 107 c]

Vppon the morewen, Whanne Jt Was day,
Whanne the kyng Wyste of this affray,
how that the dewk thus was agon,
the dwchesse, and the meyne echon,
he sente aftyr his cownseyl jn hye,
and told hem of this velenye,
also of the spyt he hadde hym j-don,
to hym and to alle his Baronye echon;
where-offen merveillede al that Feste
that there beleften, bothe lest and meste.
thus Spoken they alle of this clause,
but lytel wisten they what was his cause.
"j take witnesse," quod the kyng, "of 3ow in fere
that more worschepe J dede hym here
thanne to ony oþer j dede at þe feste present."
and that wisten they alle wel, verament.
"and 3ow like," quod the kyng,
"j schal him sende newe tydyng,
that he come and amendis make
of that he hath a3ens me take,
and that jn the same degre he hennes wente,
that he a3en come with good entente."
and herto acorded his cownsaille,
3if that it myhte ony thyng avaylle.
and on the kynges behalve, verament,
tweyne worthy men weren there sent,
and comen streyht rydynge to Tyndagel.
the dewk they fownden & his meyne eche del,
and seiden as they were charged of the kyng,
and of the dewk they abyden here answeryng.

Next morning, the king receives the news.

He calls in his council, relates what has happened,

and says he should like to send orders for him to return with the same company with which he left.

Two messengers are sent to Tyndagel.

4980. *Contre*, *c* corrected from *l*.
5009. *wer'*, *r'* through correction.

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Whanne the dewk vndirstood al this,
that Nedis he Moste azen comen, j-wis,
jn the same degre that he was there,
thanne moste with hym gon ygwerne, his fere,
and that wolde he for non Maner of thyng,
The duke refuses to return to the court. and Ryht so sente he to seyne to the kyng,
and seide: "to cowrt j wele not Gon
amongis hem that ben My fon!"
thus thanne wente þe Messengeris ageyn,
and the answere tolde the kyng, ful pleyn.
thanne, whanne these Messengeris weren agon,
The duke sends for his counsellors, and tells them the cause of his sudden departure. þe dewk aftyr his cownseille thanne sente anon,
and tolde hem the cause ful pleynly,
the cause of his comeng so hastely,
and what schame the kyng gan hym purchase,
that cawsed hym to voyden owt of þat plase.
and whanne they herden his pleyneng,
They promise him their help. they 3oven the dewk good comfortyng,
and seiden: "he þat schame to his lige wyle purchase,
on hym May be-happen the same grace!"
Thanne preyde hem the dewk anon
hem of helpe and socour Everichon,
and his lond helpen to defende,
3if þe kyng on hym ony werre wolde sende.
so that him they grawntyd, with-owten stryf,
To lesen bothe here hedes and lyf.
When the king's messengers return with the duke's reply, whanne þe Messengeris to Cordwel were comen jn fere,
The kyng they fownden and þe barowns there.
and word for word they tolden the kyng
what Maner was þe dewkis answeryng.
the barons are surprised. thanne seiden þe barowns that weren there,
they Merveilled Mochel of his answere,
For they helden hym a ful wys Man,
what that so Evere Eylede hym than.
The king asks them to assist him. thanne preide the kyng his barowns anon
hym helpen to avengen of his fon
and of the dispyt he hath him do—
"and My feste thus distorbled so."
Thanne answerede these barowns ageyn,
[leaf 107 d] And preyden the Kyng alle, Ful pleyn,

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of fowrty dayes to ȝeven hym warneng;
and the kyng hem grauntyd here askyng.
thanne sente the kyng Messengeris ful Lel
to the dewk of tyndagel,
and seide, atte the fowrtythe day
he wolde him visite, ȝif he may.
and þerto he preide his barowns Echon
Redy to ben with hym thedyr to gon.
and whanne the dewk herde this tydyng,
the dewk hym purveyed jn alle thing,
and abowtes sente faste to his Meyne
hym helpen forto socoure jn that degre.
and they senten answere aȝen there,
they wolden jt don to here powere.
thanne seide the dewk to his cownseylle,
he ne hadde but twey castelis þat myhte avaylle—
" whiche nethir of thike two
he schal neuere wynne, what he kan do.
þerfore jn tyndagel j schal leven Ygwerne,
and ten knyhtes hire forto Governe,
the wheche of non assawt ȝyven cure
of non Man lyvenge, J ȝow Enswre.
and to the tothyr j wele Go,
þere to defenden me fro my fo,
For of non assawt j ne Rekke,
thowh he aȝens me ordeyne neuer so wykke!"
and that castel ful strong he gan to Make
al only for the kynges Sake.
thanne to þe kyng comen þe Messengeres ageyn,
and tolden þe answere to þe kyng, ful pleyn,
that he wolde defenden hym to his Myht,
as he was trewe an a gentyl knyht.
thanne sente the kyng aftyr his barown
thorwh-owt al his Regiown,
and Made hem to semblen al jn fere
atte the Entre of the dewkis lond þere,
beside a Ryver jn a fair Mede;
the barowns þere semblede jn þat stede.
and whanne they weren assembled Euerichon,
the kyng Rehersed the dispyt anon

Word is sent to the duke that the king will visit him on the fortieth day.

The duke gathers provisions,

is promised help by his men,

leaves Ygwern in Tyndagel,

and goes himself to the other strong castle that he possesses.

The king is told of the duke's resolute behaviour.

He summons his barons to meet on the border,

and puts the case before them.

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that the dewk dyde jn his plas,
at his feste there he was.
The king invades the duke's land. and thus entred þe kyng with his meyne
jnto þe dewkis lond, ful Sykerle,
and there sesede he al his lond,
as J do 3ow now forto vndirstond.
He hears about the two castles, thanne was Jt told to the kyng
that jn tyndagel, with-owten lesyng,
that *þere*-jnne was Ygwerne *þat* dewchesse
Jn strong hold and jn distresse,
and the dewk jn a-nothyr castel was,
that was not allynges so strong a plas.
thanne axede the kyng anon cow*n*saille,
whiche castel he scholde ferst assaylle.
thanne cownseille they 3oven hym everichon
and resolves to try to take the duke's castle first. that ferst to the dewkys he scholde gon.
and *þer*to the kyng grau*n*tyd as faste,
and to that castel ano*n* ryden they jn haste.
thanne spak the kyng to vlphyn tho,
and axede hym there what he scholde do.
"but 3if that j myhte Sen ygwerne,
of sore morneng kan no*n* man me werne."
Ulfin exhorts him to be patient in the meantime. thanne seide vlphyn to hym ageyne:
"3it a while 3e mosten Suffren peyne;
for a thing *þat* may not 3it be,
to the ende moste ben suffred, parde!"

[leaf 106 *a*]

Longe lay the kyng At this Castel,
The castle, however, cannot be taken, and the king frets. but hit avayllede hym nevere a del,
So that he was Jn his gret morneng,
for to that castel he myhte don no*n* thing,
and alther most for love of the dewchesse,
whiche browhte his herte jn gret distresse.
One day, he is seen weeping in his tent. So that vppon a day, as jt fyl thore,
jn his pavylown he wepte ful sore.
and his meyne go*n*nen it to aspye,
and thens they wenten ful prevylye.

5096. *Now*, *n* through correction.
5109. *thāne*, the *n*-mark and the top part of *e* in blacker ink.
5119. *gret* added above the line. 5120. MS. *forto*.

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thanne cam vlphyn and that aspyde,
and jn to hym goth at that Tyde.
Anon whanne he him say wepen thore,
hit hym ou*er*thowhte wondyrly sore,
and he axede the kyng why he wepte tho.
"what nede is to the to askyn ME so?
For weten ȝe wel that j schal deye
for ygwernes love, certeynlye,
and that is now my destyne,
For bothen mete and drynk js benome*n* ME,
and al kende REste is bereft me fro,
that good o*ber* ESe ony man Scholde do."
whanne that vlphyn herde al this:
"of Feble herte ȝe ben, j-wys,
For a wo*m*mans love that ȝe scholen deye.
let be, for schame, and nowht so seye!
but wylen ȝe aftyr MY cownseylle wende,
ano*n* aftyr M*er*lyne that ȝe sende,
where that EVere he MOwe be fownde,
that he to ȝow come with-jnne a stownde.
for he kan ȝeven ȝow ful good cownseylle,
that to ȝowre herte it schal wel avaylle.
and gra*u*ntyth hym, so god ȝow save,
For his labour what he wyle haue!
For he kan Jt RIht ful wel do,
and no*n* MAn but he, j seye ȝow so."
thanne quod the kyng: "that wot j wel,
he is ful ko*n*neng EVerydel,
and j wot wel he knoweth al MY distresse;
but that he be wroth with this, j gesse,
For the place at the table assayed was
at cardweille, jn that RYal plas;
and so then it is now longes ago
that he to ME ne cam not to.
and j trowe it ou*er*thenketh him thore
that MY liges wif j loue so sore.
but Sertes, j ne MAy non other do,
whethir it torne me to wele o*ber* wo.

Ulfin goes to the king, and asks him why he weeps.

The king says that Ulfin knows the reason well.

Ulfin, after censuring the king for his weakness,

advises him to send for Merlin,

and to give him anything he shall demand for his help.

The king fears that Merlin is angry on account of the attempt to fill the vacant seat,

and on account of the king's unlawful love.

5131. MS. *axeke.*

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and j wot wel he wil me telle myn entent,
that this was þe cause J fore hym sent."
Ulfin hopes that Merlin will soon arrive.
"of on thing," quod vlphin, "J schal 3ow telle:
he is heyl and sownd jn flesch and felle.
and 3if he 3ow love as 3e suppose he do,
he wyl non while now ben 3ow fro,
3if that he knowe 3owre distresse
owther ony part of 3oure hevynesse;
that sone tydynges scholen 3e here
of hym, and þerfore be of ryht good chere!"

Ulfin asks the king to cease fretting, and be merry with his men.
Thus comforted sire vlphyn the kyng,
and bad hym to beleven his morneng,
and þere to senden aftyr his men,
and to hem gret joye to make than;
his peyne so scholde he thanne forȝete,
and solace and mirthe there to hym gete.
the kyng hym seide, he wolde so do—
"but my love may j not forȝeten so."
Renewed attacks prove fruitless.
thanne thus the castel the kyng gan assaile,
but lytel oþer nowht jt dede hym avaylle.
One day, Ulfin rides out, and meets a [leaf 108 b] seemly old man,
Jt happede vppon a day that vlphyn rod
thorwh-owt þe ost, and not abod,
And mette there With a semly man,
that this Sire vlphyn knew not than.
thanne seide this good man to vlphyn tho:
who desires to speak with him.
"Sire, j wolde with 3ow speken a word oþer two."
thanne seide sire vlphyn to hym ageyn:
"and *with* 3ow, Sire, now jn certeyn!"
So forth they wente*n*, ful wel j wot,
vlphyn on hors-bak, & þe good man on fot.
Ulfin alights,
and there Sire vlphyn alyht a-down
with that good man to han Som resown.
and asks who he is.
Sire vlphyn axede what he was.
he seide: "as an old man 3e sen jn þis plas,
and of my 3owthe wysdom j kan
as mochel as som other man"—
and þere tolde vlphyn of manye a thyng

5172. *hevyneſſe*, *y* corrected from *e*.
5190. *with*, *w* corrected from 3.

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that to vlphyn there was wel knoweng,
and atte laste tolde hym Jn cownseyl
how he hadde j-ben atte Tyndagel,
and that but lytel while ago—
" where as a good man Seide me vnto
that 3owre kyng lovede the dewkis wyf,
and for hire distressed sore of his lif,
and 3oure kyng hath distroyed his lond,
For he ladde ygwerne from cardweill, j vndirstond.
and, Sire, and 3e wylen vndirstonden me,
3if 3owre kyng wyle 3even me large fe,
J knowe where that is a good man
that 3ow with ygwerne schal don speken than,
and that ful wel kan cownseillen 3oure kyng
of al his love to haven fondyng."
and whanne that vlphyn herde al this,
he merveillede what man he was, j-wis,
and preide hym to leven alle manere of thing,
and that man to bringen to the kyng
that of his love him cowde cownseille,
the bettere that it hym myhte avaylle.
thanne seide this olde man ageyn:
" j wile ferst knowen my wages, certeyn."
thanne axede of hym vlphyn there:
" where schal j 3ow fynde, telle me now here."
" To morwen 3e scholen me here fynde
betwene this and þe ost, haue þis jn mynde."
and so there departyd they ful snelle,
and seide to vlphyn þat he wolde hym telle
vppon the morwen Swiche tydyng—
" that to thin herte schal ben gret lykyng."
Anon Sire vlphyn to the kyng gan gon,
and told hym these wordis everichon.
thanne, whanne the kyng herde al this,
he lowhe and made gret joye and blis.
thanne seide the kyng to vlphyn a3e:
" knowe 3e þat man, and 3e hym se?"
" 3e, sire, it is ryht an old man

The old man says he knows of the king's love for Ygwern,

and that he, for a handsome reward, will tell of one who can help the king.

Ulfin eagerly asks him to bring the man.

The old man wants first to know his reward.

They appoint to meet again next morning.

Ulfin returns home with the good news.

The king is delighted, and inquires about the man.

5210. *j*, MS. *jn*.

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and feble, as j discryven kan." 5240

The king inquires about the appointed meeting.

"Sire vlphin, whanne hath he behoten the
a3en to Meten *with* 3ow, certeinle?"
"To Morwen j Moste with hym Mete,
and hym to tellen what 3e him behete." 5244
thanne seide the kyng, with-owten drede:
"thedyr, vlphyn, j preye thou me lede!"
"Sire, gladly," quod vlphyn, "that wyl j do."

He is willing to give any reward.

"and 3if behynden me 3e speken hym vnto, 5248
So behoteth hym what he wyle have,
o*þer* ony thing that he wyle of 3ow crave!"
and thus abyden they al that Nyht,
and the kyng was bothe joyful and lyht, 5252
Mochel Meriere thanne he was to-fore,
that ony of his Men knewen thore.

Next morning Ulfin and the king ride forth.

On the Morwe, aftyr Masse, thanne vlphyn Rod,
and the kyng aftyr not longe abod, 5256
but Rod jnto swich a partye
[leaf 108 c] As he Was Gyded, sekerlye.
and whanne the ost they gonnen to pase,

They see a blind cripple,

a lame Man Syen they jn that plase, 5260
that Nethir ne Myht gon ne Se,
thus semed hem, ful certeinle.
So that anon they pasten hym by,

who calls out that he can help the king.

and thussone he sette vpe a lowd Cry. 5264
he seide: "sire kyng, god fulfille thi wille,
alle that thin herte desireth vntylle!
and 3if þou wilt 3even Me ony thyng,
j schal fulfille thyn owne desireng." 5268

The king looks at Ulfin, and asks if that is the man.

thanne loked the kyng on vlphin ful snelle,
and seide: "is thys he that scholde me telle
of Myn desir and of Myn honour?
how hast þou, vlphyn, don thyn labour?" 5272

Ulfin says no.

"Nay, Sire," quod vlphyn, "jt Nis not he
that j schold hauen, Sire, Sikerle,
that scholde me tellen of thy chawnse,
jt nys not he, with-owten variaunce." 5276

5263. *anō*, the *n*-mark in blacker ink. 5269. MS. *ōn*.

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"knowest thou him that scholde meten the,
and of thing that j most love, to tellen me?
go thow to hym, & thus thou say,
that j the to hym sente this day,
and þat he schal have that he wyle axen of me,
of that j am jn sesyd, ful Sekerle;
he schal it haven at his owne wille,
3if that my desir he wyl fulfille!"
vlphyn this word non thing ne took,
but sette hym down, and þe arende forsook,
besides this lame man sette hym adown.
thussone of vlphyn he axede a resown,
and axede of hym what he dide there,
and for what thing he cam forto enqwere.
he seide: "the kyng sente me to the,
and me to the hath 3oven, ful sikerle."
thanne gan to lawhen this man anon,
and seide þat—"þe kyng parceyved me son,
and knoweth me bettere thanne þou dost,
and seeth in me more thanne thou wost.
j wile that thou knowe, certeinle,
that thike old man me sente to the;
but of non thing j wyl the telle
of owht þat he to me of gan spelle.
go thow forth faste to the kyng,
and seie hym: and he wil hauen his askyng,
grete 3iftes moste he 3even, Jn fay,
his wil to parforme, 3if that J may.
For fulsone hadde he parceyved me,
þerfore þe bettere with hym schal it be."
"Fayn wolde j," quod vlphin, "of 3ow enqwere,
what that 3e ben, to tellen me here."
"Axe thou thy kyng," thanne seide this man,
"For he ful wel tellen the can."
thanne to horsbak wente vlphyn anon,
and faste aftyr the kyng gan he gon.
and whanne the kyng Sawh hym comen rydynge:
"vlphyn, wherto comest þou, and for what thinge?
whanne to that man 3af j the,

The king tells Ulfin to go to the man and grant him anything he shall demand.

Ulfin sits down with the cripple,

who laughingly says: "The king knows me better than you do.

I am sent by the old man.

If the king will have his desire, he must give great gifts.

Thou mayst ask the king who I am."

Ulfin rides to the king.

5315. *mā* added above the line.

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wherto comest þou aȝen to me?" 5316

Ulfin tells the king what the cripple has said.

thanne seide vlphyn to hym ageyn:
"he seith ȝe knewen hym, jn certeyn,
and konnen me tellen what that he is;
thus to me, Sire kyng, he seide j-wys." 5320

The king declares that the seemly old man and the cripple are the same person:

"Sye thou that man that spak to the
jn semblaunce of an old man so feythfulle?—
and this man that thow sye here this day,
al it is on, Sire vlphin, with-owten nay." 5324
"A, Sire kyng, how may this be, Sure,
that a man him-self scholde disfegure?"

[leaf 108 *d*]

"ȝe, Syre, J Hym knowe Wel and fyne,

Merlin.

For this same man, it js *Mer*lyne!" 5328
Aȝen thanne wenten they bothe jn fere
anon with *Mer*lyne to speken there.

Meanwhile, Merlin has gone to the king's tent in his natural shape.

and *Mer*lyne was gon to þe kynges tente
jn his ryht Semblaunce, veramente, 5332
and axede aftyr the kyng anon.
thanne to seken wente messengeres þusson,

The king, being told,

and metten the kyng, and him tolde
that *Mer*lyne was comen and hym haven wolde. 5336
thanne was the kyng so joyful a man,
that on word ne cowde he speken than,

quickly makes for home.

but tornede ageyn with al his myht,
and to hym clepede vlphyn ful ryht, 5340
and seide: "it is as j the seye:
*Mer*lyne js comen now, certeinlye!"

Ulfin commends Merlin's power.

quod vlphyn: "now that ȝe haven hym at ȝowre wille,
alle ȝoure desire he may fulfylle. 5344
and loke þat [ȝe] graunten hym that he wyl have,
owther of ȝoure good what he wyl krave,
For þere nys no man þat kan so wel as he
to ygwernes love ȝow bryngen, sykerle." 5348
thanne to hym seide the kyng ageyn:
"his wille wile j fulfillen, certeyn!"

They find Merlin in the tent.

Thus riden they forth to þe kynges tente,
there Fownden merlyn anon presente. 5352

5345. MS. *þ graūden.*

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and whanne the kyng hym gan aspye,
to hym he ran ful hastylye,
and hym embraced, and kyste also,
and ful gret joye he made him tho,
and seide that ryht welcomen he was,
and often hym kyste jn that plas,
and seide: "to 3ow j wolde me compleyne,
but 3e knowen it as wel as j, certeyne;
For was there neuere non man
that me can declaren that 3e kan;
and þerfore j preye 3ow, for charite,
of myn hertly desir to helpen me!"
"j vndirstonde 3ow wel, with-owten nay,
but with-owten [vlphyn] j schal nowht say."
thanne wenten they alle thre on syde,
and jn cownseill spoken that jlke tyde.
thanne tolde the kyng to Merlyne anone
that to vlphyn he tolde thussone—
"that 3e weren that olde man,
and sethen the toþer þat he beheld than."
thanne vlphyn faste beheld him there:
"may it so ben jn ony manere,
lyk as the kyng here telleth me?"
"3e, Sire vlphyn," quod merlyne, "certeinle!
For assone as he the to me sente,
thanne wist y wel he hadde knoweliching, veramente."
"Now, Sire kyng," quod vlphyn thanne,
"Speke 3e to merlyne, this good manne,
of Swich thinges as 3e haven to do,
and that he wolde 3ow helpen þerto."
thanne seide the kyng to hym ageyn
that— "j kan neþer non thing don ne seyn,
that he ne knoweth myn hole entent,
thowh j scholde maken lesynges, verament.
and sethen that al myn herte þat he doth knowe
and alle myn prevy thowhtes vppon a rowe,
wherefore j preye 3ow, for charyte,
To Ygwernes love that 3e helpen me.

The king gives him a hearty welcome,

and refers to his own sore distress.

Merlin says he understands him.

The king tells Merlin of his having seen through his twofold disguise.

Ulfin is incredulous,

but Merlin confirms the king's words.

The king avows that Merlin knows all his thoughts,

and implores his assistance.

5366. MS. *with owten j.*
5375. *lyk*, *l* through correction. 5378. MS. *wisty.*

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and what thing that Evere thou biddest me do,
J schal it fulfillen with-owten Mo!"
Merlin, on a certain condition, promises to help the king to the possession of Ygwern. thanne seide to hym Merlyne ageyn:
"and thow wilt fulfyllen, jn certeyn,
Of thing that j schal axen of the,
[leaf 109 a] Ryht Wel thyn Arende J-sped schal be,
and jn hire chambre schalt thow Slepe,
and jnto hire bed schalt thow lepe,
and liggen to-gederis bothe two,
body to body, Er that thow go."
Ulfin rejoices; thanne gan to lawhen Sire vlphyn,
whanne he herde that so spak Merlyn.
thanne seide the kyng to Merlyne tho:
"herkeneth now what j sey 3ow vnto:
the king is willing to give Merlin anything within his power. loke what Maner of thing that 3e wilen crave;
and it Mowe be fownden, 3e scholen it have!"
thanne answeryd Merlyne, ful certeinle:
"how þere-offen Myht y Syker now be?"
thanne seide the kyng to Merlyne ageyn:
"what Sewraunce axen 3e, sey me ful pleyn,
and j schal fulfillen thy wille,
what so Evere come Me vntylle!"
Merlin wants Ulfin to be security for the fulfilment of the king's promise. "j wyle that vlphyn swere to Me
that þere-offen siker schal j be.
and whanne to Me hath he sworn Everydel,
vppon the Morwen, wete thou Ryht wel
that al thy wil schalt thow have
of me, swich thing as þou dost crave."
thanne seide the kyng, he wolde fulfille
alle þat Evere he seide hym vntylle.
thanne axede Merlyne of vlphyn there
3if that Sewrawnce he wolde swere.
Not without scruples, Ulfin complies. "jt forthenketh me," quod vlphyn, "trewely,
that oth to swere, Natheles wele j."

Whanne Merlyne herde this acord,
anon gan he lawhen at that word,
The king's relics are brought. and axede whanne þe Surawnce Mad scholde be.
thanne anon the kyng let bryngen, Sykerle,
alle the Reliques that he hadde there,

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and his oþer holy thinges Jn fere ;
and þere-vppon Sworen they bothe two
that Merlyne to hem devisede tho.
and they sworen be his Sewrawnce,
jt scholde be don with-owten variawnce,
with-owten frawde other Mal-Engyne ;
this oth Sworen they to Merlyne.
and aftyr this, with-owten dowtaunce,
the kyng to vlphyn swor, *with*-owten variaunce,
To kepen sekerly that he hadde hyht,
as that he was a trewe knyht.
thanne seide the kyng to Merlyne tho :
"Now sethen oure Surawnce þat we have do,
that ȝe wolden don that ȝe hauen hyht,
and therto to putten alle ȝowre Myht,
My desir forto don and to fulfille
of thyke that j spak to ȝow of vntylle !"
thanne seide Merlyne to the kyng :
"ȝow behoveth over alle Maner thing
to ben sad Jn ȝowre Governaunce,
For sche is wis, with-owten varyaunce,
and therto trewe aȝens God and Man.
and now the sothe j schal preven ȝow than,
what power j haue hyre forto Engyne,
ȝe scholen now heren be craft Myne.
the semblaunce of þe dewk j wyl putten to the,
that non Man schal ȝow from hym knowen, sikerle.
and thike dewk hath two knyhtes,
that he trosteth passyng owt-Ryhtes,
and to hym they ben Most preve
of alle þe Men jn cristyente,
and to Ygwerne they ben also
the prevyest Men that Mown go.
the ton of hem Sire Bretel hyhte,
The tothir, jordayns, a Man of Myhte.
And Bretelis semblaunce j wil take,
And Vlphyn Jordayns Schal not Forsake.
so the castel gates j schal don vndo,
and jn to Entren, with-owten Mo,
alle thre jn this Semblaunce ;

5432 5436 5440 5444 5448 5452 5456 5460 5464 5468

First the king and Ulfin swear on the relics after Merlin's dictation;

then the king swears another oath for the security of Ulfin.

This being done, Merlin says: "You must act prudently, for Ygwern is a wise and true woman.

I will put on you the figure of the duke.

The duke has two confidants,

Bretel (p. 130) and Jordan.

I and Ulfin will take [leaf 109 b] their shapes.

Thus we shall all get into Ygwern's castle.

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thus scholen we gon, *with*-owten variaunce.
Meanwhile, let your barons stay quietly outside the duke's castle,
but whanne we gon alle jn fere,
3oure barowns a3en þat 3e Retourne þere,
and chargeth hem jn alle wyse
that to þe castel they Maken non aprise
jnto þe tyme that 3e comen ageyn;
that 3e hem 3yven warneng ful pleyn.
and tell nobody where we are going."
and that to non Man that 3e sende
whedyr 3e schole gon, j 3ow forfende."
thanne swor the kyng be his oth,
he wold it not don for lef ne loth.
"thanne Trosteth me, with-owten variaunces,
J schal 3ow delyveren these semblaunces."

The king follows Merlin's directions,
Anon the kyng dyde his devere
of thinges that Merlyne comanded hym þere.
and whanne that thus hadde he do,
thanne anon to Merlyne gan he go,
and seide: "j have fulfild 3owre byddyng,
Now do 3e Myn ouer alle thyng!"
"Lete vs Remeve," quod Merlyne, "welsone,
and alle thre to-gederis scholen we gone."
and the three start for Tyndagel.
So longe alle thre to-gederis paste,
that to tyndagel they comen atte laste.
thanne seide Merlyne to the kyng:
"betwixen vlphyn and me Make 3oure abydyng."
and whanne Merlyne hadde wrowht al his thyng,
thanne seide he anon to the kyng:
The king is told to rub himself with a herb,
"Take 3e this herbe that is here,
and Frote 3owre visage al jn fere,
3oure hondis, 3oure body, 3oure feet also;
jn alle wyse that 3e thus do."
the kyng thanne dide his comaundement.
and is invested with the figure of the duke.
thanne hadde he hol semblaunce, verament,
lik as the dewk it hadde j-be,
j Seye 3ow, Sires, ful certeinle.
thanne cam merlyne to þe kyng:

5470. The line was omitted and then written down the margin.
5492. *tyndagel*, *dag* through correction (probably from *gel*).

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"be-thenke ȝow now of a thyng:
ȝif Evere jordayn that ȝe sye."
"ȝis," quod the kyng thanne, "Sekerlye!"
thussone hadde vlphyn jordayns lyknesse;
To-forn the kyng he gan him dresse.
and whanne the kyng beheld al this,
he Merveilled howh it myhte ben, j-wis.
thanne axede the kyng of vlphyn there:
"how thenkest þou be My semblaunce here?"
"Sire," quod vlphyn, "be this day
j knowe ȝow not but for þe dewk, jn fay!"
and the kyng him tolde, with-owten varyawnce,
that Evene hadde he jordayns Semblawnce.
and thanne loked they bothe vppon Merlyn tho,
and Bretelis semblaunce hem semede bothe two.
thanne thus abyden they al jn fere,
tyl that the day was past so clere.
and whanne the day was over past,
toward the castel they comen jn hast,
and comen to the castel gate,
and Merlyne, as Bretel, clepid þere-ate.
thanne þe Meyne that was þere with-jnne,
comen to the ȝate, and wolden not blynne.
and whanne they Syen the dewk verrayly,
as to here Semeng, ful certeinly:
"openeth the ȝate, taketh jn ȝowre lord!"
thus seide Merlyne jn Bretelis word.
thanne thowhten alle þat with-jnne weren than,
that it was the dewk, Bretel, & jordayn.
thanne Bretel charged al that Meyne
That jn alle thinges they scholde kepen it preve—
"And telleth non Man of the dukes comenge,
J ȝow charge aboven alle thynge."
but certein peple jnowe þere were
that the dwchesse it tolde to there.
and tyl they comen jnto þe jnnere paleys,
Er thanne wolde they not Ses.

The king is desired to think of Jordan,

and in the same moment Ulfin stands before him in Jordan's shape.

Merlin puts on the appearance of Bretel.

In the evening, they all go to Ygwern's castle.

Merlin tells the garrison to let in their lord,

and to keep his arrival secret.

[leaf 109 c]

5506. *a* added above the line.
5509. *vlphyn*, *v* corrected from *j*.
5522. *waſ*, *ſ* corrected from *t*.

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and Merlyn took the kyng on side,
and hym cownseilled that jlke tyde
that of lyht chere he Scholde be.

The king, attended by Merlin and Ulfin, goes into Ygwern's bed-room.

and so jnto chambre wenten they alle thre,
there as Ygwerne on bedde lay;
alle thre they weren, the sothe to say.
and as hastely as they myhte,
the kyng sone they gonnen vndyhte,
tyl that with ygwerne jn bedde he was,
where Arthewr was be-geten jn þat plas.

She is joyful at the arrival of the pretended husband.

gret Joye thanne made that lady,
that hire lord wende haue had, verrayly,
which that sche lovede Jn herte and thowht;
but thanne anothir was to hire j-browht.
and thus to-gederis they lyen that nyht,
the dwchesse and that gentyl knyht,

In the morning, there arrives news of a battle in which the duke has been killed.

and tyl on the morwen, that it was day,
that jn the town they gonne to say
that the dewk j-slayn there was,
and his styward taken Jn that plas.

Merlin steals into the bed-room,

Anon cam Merlyne ful prevyly
þere as the kyng lay the lady by,

and asks the king to rise

and seide: "Sire, now ryseth vp anon,
For merveillous tydynges here now gon,
that algates ȝe scholden ben ded;
þerfore Rise vpe owt of this sted!

and to hasten home, as his people must think him dead.

and that ȝe weren at ȝowre castel,
For al ȝowre peple weneth ful wel
that Sekerly ȝe scholden ben slayn;
Swiche wordis ben comen, Jn certayn."
"Non wondir," quod the kyng tho,
"For so prevyly j gan from hem go,
that there-offen ne wyste knyht ne sweyne
Sauf onliche J and ȝe tweyne."

The king rises,

thanne vpe he Ros, and non lengere abod,
and to-forn hem alle that there stod

bids a loving farewell to Ygwern,

he took his leve of gentyl Ygwerne,
and hire often kyste, and wolde not werne,

5565. *vp* added above the line.

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and isswed owt of that castel,
that be hym Supposede non man but wel.
And whanne that owt they weren j-gon,
thanne seide Merlyne to the kyng anon:
"J haue the fulfyld myn covenaunt,
that j the made, and myn avenant,
and þerfore loke that thou holde me myne,"
Seide to the kyng thanne Merlyne.
"that is ful trewe," quod the kyng tho,
"Ful good Servyse ȝe han me do.
bettere neuere man to oþer don myhte,
as that j am a gentyl knyhte.
and therfore thy mede qwyten J schal,
as j am trewe kyng j-kyd oueral.
Sey on what thyng that thow wilt crave,
and Feithfully thou schalt it haue!"
thanne seide Merlyne to hym ageyn:
"An eyr thow hast be-getyn, jn certeyn,
vppon Ygwerne that dewchesse,
which is a sone, jn ful Sekernesse,
and that child hast thou ȝoven me
For my gwerdoun, Sire, Sikerle.
and loke that thou wryte bothe day and owr
That thou hast wrowht this dishonowr;
thanne schalt thou knowen in eche weye
ȝyf Jt be trowthe that J the seye."
Anon Riht so thanne dede the kyng,
and fulfilled al his askyng.

and passes out of the castle.

Now Merlin reminds him of their agreement.

The king declares he will keep it.

Merlin demands the fruit of the king's unlawful intercourse: his son and heir, whom Ygwern will give birth to.

[leaf 109 *d*]

The king assents.

So thanne reden they forth al jn fere,
Tyl that they comen to on revere,
and there they weschen hem alle thre
here owne Semblaunce to haven, sekerle.
So pasten they forth in gret haste,
tyl to here ost they comen atte laste.
and whanne that his meyne gan hym aspye,
abowtes hym they flokkeden hastelye,
and of hem axede he anon

The three men ride to a river,

wash there,

recover their natural shapes,

and get back to the army.

5599. *that* corrected from *the*.

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how that the dewk ded was so son.
The king is told how the duke, when noticing the king's absence from the army,
and they hym tolden, ful certeynlye,
how that cas befyl, ful openlye:
"Jt happede, as sone as ȝe were gon,
Ful preve we kepten vs Everychon;
and that parceyved the dewk thussone,
that owt of the ost ȝe were gone,
and dyde armen his Men jn haste,
made a sally from the castle,
that so on vs they comen welfaste,
and Mochel harm deden on owre Meyne.
anon to armes thanne gonnen we fle,
and vppon hem we precede welfaste,
tyl to the ȝates we comen atte laste.
So there the dewk fawht sore, certeyn,
and was killed in the ensuing battle.
tyl that his hors vndyr hym was Slayn,
and there the dewk was beten adown
with ȝowre Men abowtes jn virown,
whiche that knewen hym non thyng,
that so cawhte he there his Endyng.
and the Remenaunt of his Meyne fowhten wel sore,
whanne that they syen here lord ded thore."
The king is sorry.
Thanne ouerthowhte the kyng ful sore, j-wis,
of the dewkys deth, with-owten Mys.

Chap. V.

Thus, as this Storyc Reherseth wel,
Ended the dewk of tyndagel;
and the kyng ouerthowhte welsore
of the aventure þat was fallen thore.
He summons his council, and wishes to give compensation.
Anon his cownseyl thanne dide he calle
This trespas to a-Menden forth withalle,
and that his Meyne hym blamen ne scholde,
but that amendis fayn Maken he wolde.
thanne be-spak vlfyn, ful certeynle,
that with the kyng was ful preve.
"Sire," seide vlphyn, "sethen jt is now so,
Nedly amendis Moste be do."
Ulfin takes the barons aside,
thanne took vlphyne the barowns on syde,
and with hem cownseilede at that tyde.

5652. *Nedly*, e through correction.

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" how MOWN we best amendes MAKE
to this lady for hire lordis sake
and to hire frendes EVERYCHON,
that for his deth MAKEN gret MON?
of wheche the kyng now doth 3ow preye
hym to cownseillen jn the beste weye."
" that welen we don with good wille,
and owre wittes it fulfylle.
but, goode vlphyn, alle we 3ow preye,
the beste cownseille *þat* 3e wele*n* vs seye,
For 3e knowen best the kynges ENTENT,
what he thynketh to don, verament."
" hopen 3e thanne that j am so preve
with the kyng Jn alle degre?"
" Sere, 3e, we knowe*n* the for a wys MAN,
and MOCHEL of good cownseyl thow can."
thanne seide vlphyn to hem ageyn:
" MYN avis j schal 3ow seyn, certeyn,
and thanne 3if ony bettere 3e ko*n*nen do,
that 3e wolde seyen jt me vnto.
J wolde that the kyng wolde don sende
Alle abowtes, jnto EVERICH ENDE
Where that the dewk Hath ony MEYNE,
at Tyndagel to MAKEN Semble.
and thedyr wolde j that the kyng wente
there with hem to METEN jn good ENTENTE,
and don his Frendis comen hym before,
and also the lady that is thore.
so that the kyng hym qwyten schal, certeynle,
afore alle the peple that there be;
that 3if they Refusen his proferyng,
3e scholen holden hem folis ou*er* alle thing,
and the kyng to holden a passyng wys MAN,
that so MOCHEL wele proferyn hem than."
thanne answerede these barowns ageyn:
" to 3ow we acorden, Jn certeyn!"
thanne comen they alle to-fore the kyng,
and tolden hym al of here cownseyllyng,
and how they cownseilled hem betwen;
what therby hym thowhte, now let Sen:

and asks their opinion.

The barons defer to Ulfin,

whom they consider a wise man.

Ulfin proposes a general meeting at Tyn- [leaf 110 *a*] dagel,

where the king is to offer satisfaction.

The barons approve of this.

The proposal is put before the king.

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The king consents, and sends messengers to the late duke's kinsmen.

Anon the kyng concentyd therto,
and comanded Messengeris faste forto go
with his lettres jnto Eche contre,
To the dewkis kennesmen, ful sekerle,
and that to hym they scholde comen Echon,
Jn pes and trews to comen an gon,
and there amendement to Maken, certeyne,
of alle thing they wolde compleyne.
3it thowhte the kyng thanne ful wel
Forto Remeve jnto Cardewel.

Merlin informs the king that the advice given him by the barons is in reality Ulfin's.

thanne Merlyne to the kyng cam anon,
and to hym tolde there thusson:
"weten 3e hos js this cownsaylle?"
"Nay," quod the kyng, "with-owten faille,
but that al My Baronye
hath me thus cownceilled, trewelye!"
"Nay," quod Merlyne, "jt Nys not so,
But vlphynes cownseyl halpe þerto.
For he is bothe wis and war,
and þe pes amonges hem declarede thar
bettere thanne alle they cowden devyse
owther it ordeynen Jn ony wyse."
thanne axede the kyng of Merlyn
what thing it was that thowhte vlphyn.

He further reveals to the king Ulfin's secret plan (pp. 160 f.),

and þere Merlyn declared hym anon
alle vlphynes thowhtes Everichon.
and whanne the kyng herde al this,
Ful Mochel Joye he Made, j-wys.
"how thenken 3e?" quod the kyng tho,
"Myht it ony wyse bettere be do?"
"Nay," quod Merlyne, "ful Sekerle.

of which he greatly approves.

Jt is the beste cownseille þat May be;
thanne hast thow thyn hertly Entent,
that thou hast desired, verament.
Now from the thanne wele j gon,

Finally he wishes to speak with Ulfin and the king together.

but with vlphyn and the j wele speken alon.
and whanne from 3ow that j am past,
thanne Mihtest þou axen vlphyn jn hast

5707. *cownsaylle*, *a* corrected from *e*.

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how that this pes he gan ordeygne."
and þe kyng seide he wolde, certeygne.

Anon thanne clepede the kyng vlphyn
To come spekyn *with* hym and *with* Merlyn.
thanne seide Merlyne jn here precense:
" Sere, 3e me grawntyd, *with*-owten offense,
that j scholde haven, to 3owre powere,
the child which that is 3ow[re] Eyre,
whiche 3e begoten on that dewchesse,
that Noble lady, ful of humbelnesse,
whiche non Resown that jt is
That 3e it kepen to 3owre ews, j-wis.
For 3e han put þat tyme jn Escript,
For that the trowthe 3e scholde Wyt.
and Ek also 3e knowen Ryht wel
that by me 3e Engendred it Everydel;
So that the Synne Js Most Myn,
3if j it not brynge to othyr fyn.
and Ek the Modyr aschamed scholde be
hyt Forto Norschen, ful Sekerle;
For wommen ne haven non wyt therto
here owne cownseille to helen so.
therefore wolde J that vlphyn here
me wrot a bylle be ony Manere,
bothe the Nyht and Ek the Owr
whanne thou dedest that goode labowr.
For no More schalt thou Me Se
Tyl the day of his birthe, ful sekerle,
and that same Nyht he schal be bore.
but of on thing j preye the be-fore:
that 3e leven vlphyn, what so he say,
be it be Nyht owther be day.
For nothing ne wele he tellen the,
but that profit & worschepe to þe schal be.
For the Sixe Mownthes aftyr this
with the ne schal j speken, j-wys,
and with the to speken at that tym,

In the presence of Ulfin, Merlin says to the king: "You have granted me the child which is to be born.

You cannot keep it yourself,

! [leaf 110 *b*]

and the mother would be ashamed to nourish it.

Let Ulfin write down the night of its engendering.

Now you shall not see me for some time.

But believe in Ulfin: his advice will be profitable;

5740. MS. *3ow*. 5742. *of* added above the line.
5756. *me*, MS. *we*.

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to him I will speak."

but onlich schal j speken with vlphyn.
and what that Evere to hym j seye,
loke ȝe it beleven be ony weye!"

Ulfin writes down the engendering of the child. Then Merlin says to the king privately: "Ygwern shall be thy spouse,

but say nothing to her of your previous intercourse.

Thus wrot vlphyn thengendrynge
there anon at the kynges byddynge.
and Merlyne took the kyng on Syde,
and hym there tolde at that tyde:
"Syre kyng, Ygwerne thou schalt take,
and trostyly sche schal be thy Make.
and loke thow be war Jn alle degre
that sche ne knowe nothing of the,
Neþer that thou hast be hire j-leye;
j the defende be ony weye.
For that schal ben cause, wel þou wost,
that sche wele offen abaschen hire Most.

If thou ask who is the father of her child, she shall not be able to answer, and be much ashamed."

For ȝif thow axe that lady Mylde
be whom that sche goth so with childe,
sche schal not konnen the answere
ho that is the fadyr, Jn non Manere,
So þat gret schame to hire schal be,
whanne þou to hire spekyst of swich degre.'

The king and Ulfin go to Cardwell;

Merlin goes to Blasy.

Thus took Merlyne his leve there,
and the kyng and vlphyn leften jn fere,
and gonnen to taken here jornay
streyht to cardwell, the sothe to say.
and Merlyne forth to Blasye wente
hym forto tellen his hol Entente
of this aventure and othere Mo;
Jnto scripture they deden it tho.
So now we knowen be that scripture
of these aventures, J ȝow Enswre.

The king speaks of the peace-making with his counsellors.

and whanne the kyng cam to kardweille,
anon sente he aftyr his cownseylle,
and axede hem what was best to do
of this pes-Makyng, with-owten Mo.
thanne answered they hym anon ageyn:
"pes to þe dewchesse Maken, jn certeyn,

5775. *and, d* through correction (probably from *ð*).

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and to the dewkes Frendis also,
that to tyndagel now ben j-go"—
and that they scholde agreen ou*er* al thing
jn Resou*n* to acordement of the kyng.
Thus wente*n* the barowns to tyndagel,
and the kyng abod at cardweille,
And took vlphyn there thanne onside,
And to hym seide there Jn that tyde,
and axede hym of that cownseyl there,
how þ*er*by hym lykede Jn his Manere.
and he answerede: "sire, Ryht wel
Me liketh therby now Every del."
thanne seide the kyng to hym ageyn:
"vlphyn, the pes thow hast ordeyned, certeyn,
and with-jnne thyn herte thou hast it knyt,
and what it is, wel knowe Jch Jt!"
"thanne, 3if that the pes be ordeyned by Me,
and 3if 3e it knowe*n* thanne, Sykerle,
thanne conne*n* 3e the sothe Seye,
3if that it owht 3ow plese, Jn feye."
Anon thanne answerede þe kyng vlphyn,
and seide: "it pleseth me now wel and fyn,
and lyk so as thow devised hast here,
J wolde it were wrowht Jn alle Manere."
"Nou, goode sere, Ente*r*mete 3ow non thing,
J schal it bryngen to good Endyng."
Therto the kyng him preyde ful faste,
and that Jt Myhte be don Jn al haste.
thus Endyd they here cownsaille,
and forth wente*n* the Messengeris, with-owte*n* faille,
Tyl that they come*n* to Tyndagel,
where as they fownden that lady Lel
and alle the dewkis Frendis also,
that to that lady j-comen weren tho.
thanne tolde these Messengeres þ*er*e anon,
Toforn tho lordis Everichon,
how that worthy dewk of high parage
there was slayn be his owne owtrage,
and seiden that the kyng ou*er*thowht Ryht sore
of that dede that was don thore,

The king speaks with [leaf 110 *c*] Ulfin on the point.

He says that he knows Ulfin's plan,

and that he is well pleased with it.

The king's messengers go to Tyndagel,

and speak before the assembled nobility of the duke's death,

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and of the king's desire to make peace.

wherfore gladly he wolde maken the pes—
"and therfore vs hider he ches
To that lady and his kyn also;
This is the cause we comen 3ow to."

The duchess's counsellors are favourably disposed,

thanne sien wel the ladyes cownsail
that forto stryven, it wolde not avail,
and concentyd ful wel hem to.

go to her,

And to that lady they wenten tho,
and tolden hire the answere, as it was,
of þe kynges messengeres jn þat plas,
and how he was slayn be owtrage—
"3owre worthy lord of hygh parage.
and wete 3e wel now, jn certeyn,
that a3ens the kyng mown 3e not geyn.

and advise her to listen to the king's offer.

and þerfore lesteneth and tent that 3e take
what maner of pes that the kyng wyl make.
and jn swich manere mown they seye,
that they scholen not ben refused, jn feye.
For of tweyne badde it is good to take
the bettere, and jt not forsake.
lo, lady, thus to 3ow we Say,
now 3e mown don as 3ow liketh this day!"

The duchess consents.

Thanne answerid this lady ageyn:
"3owre cownseyl j nele forsaken, certeyn,
For of my lordis cownseyl 3e were,
and so of myn 3e scholen ben here.
For j ne knowe non better jn my lond,
That j myhte better trosten, j vndirstond."

Her counsellors return to the king's messengers,

Thanne departyd they from here cownseyl anon,
and to the kynges messengeris gonne they gon.
thanne [on] of the wisest to hem Spak there,
and thus hem answerede Jn this manere:
"Jt Js my ladyes hol entent
to weten what þe kyng meneth, verament,
of hire lord, that thus ded Js,

and ask for particulars.

what his mendis scholde ben, with-owten mys."
thanne answerede the messengeris ageyn:

5851. *cownsail*, *a* corrected from *e*. 5877. MS. *thāne of*.

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"we knowen not þe kynges wille, jn certeyn,
But that he ful pes and gryth Wyle make
to this lady for hire lordis Sake,
and bad that ȝe scholden vs leve,
For as we seyn, he wyl Jt preve."
"thanne hopen we þe kyng wyl don wel
and a-menden jt everydel,
and so trewe we holden ȝow therto,
so that non otherwyse ȝe wylen do."
thus was ajorned jnto the xv day
thanne aftyr next Seweng, with-owten delay,
that the lady and hire cownsaylle
to-forn the kyng schold comen, with-owten faylle,
To heren there the kynges wylle—
"what a-mendement he wele don ȝow vntylle."
thanne seide the ladyes conseil ageyn:
"we wilen gladliche, Jn certeyn,
So that we sauf cowndyt have
From tyndagel thedyr to comen save,
and from cardweille to tyndagel aȝen;
lo, thus acordyd alle we ben."
thus knytten they vpe that ende þere,
and hom they wenten jn fair manere,
and tolden the kyng every del
how that here massage was endyd wel,
and that þe lady cowndyt wolde have—
"that sche to ȝow mylit comen Save."
thanne answerede the kyng a-geyn:
"Sche ne axeth but resown, Jn certeyn!"
thus at Cardweylle Soiorned the kyng,
and with hym vlphyn Jn cownceillyng,
and spoken of manye dyvers matere,
whiles that they weren bothe jn fere.
that so aȝens the fyftenethe day
the kyng Sente saufcondit, with-owten delay;
So that the lady and hire cownsaille,
To Cardweille comen they, sauns faille.
and whanne assembled they weren echon,
the kynges conseil and they Jn on,
thanne let the kyng of hem enqwere,

The messengers reply [leaf 110 d] that they only know of the king's wish to make peace,

and propose another meeting, to be held before the king in a fortnight.

The proposal is accepted on condition of safe-conduct.

The messengers return to Cardwell.

The king is pleased.

Safe-conduct is given, and the duchess and her counsellors arrive at Cardwell.

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The king sends word to know what satisfaction they desire.

what amendis that they wolden asken þere. 5924
thanne answerede the ladyes conseil ageyn:
"this was not owre comeng, jn certeyn,
Forto asken here ony thyng,

They say they will leave it with the king.

but to knowen the wyl of the kyng, 5928
and what pes and what acord
he wolde Maken for this worthy lord.
and this is owre ladyes Entent,
we seye 3ow, sires, now verament." 5932
thanne the cownseyl vppon the kynges side
anon to the kyng comen that tyde,
and tolden hym of the ladyes answere,
that be hire conseyl sche seide there. 5936

The king thinks the duchess a wise lady.

and whanne the kyng herde al this,
a wys lady he held hire, J-wys.
thanne clepyd he his Barowns Everichon,
anon to conseyl thanne gonnen they gon, 5940

He asks his barons to settle the peace.

and axede of hem jn what Manere
they thowhten forto Maken þe pes þere.

They want to get out of it,

thanne answered the cownseyl ageyn:
"we knowen non so wel, jn certeyn, 5944
that þe pes kan ordeynen and Make
So wel as 3e for the dewkis Sake."

but the king insists.

thanne seide the kyng to hem there:
"jn 3owre ordenaunce j have put it here, 5948
and what that Evere to Me 3e do,
certeyn, j wele concenten þerto,
and Neuere 3owre ordenaunce j schal with-seye,
what so Evere 3e demen, jn feye!" 5952
thanne answerede the cownseil tho:

After much hesitation,

"Sire, a gret charge 3e putten vs vnto,
That we ne doren not vndirtake,

[leaf 111 *a*]

But 3if that Sewraunce 3e Welen vs Make 5956
that what so Evere we granten of the,
there-offen to haven non Mawgre."
thanne spak vlphyn with-owten taryeng:
"j trowe that a fool 3e holdon the kyng, 5960
whanne 3e welen not beleven his word,
þat he to 3ow seith be his owne acord!"

they undertake the task,

"3is, hym beleven we, ful Sekerlye,

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but of on thyng we wolden hym preye:
that ȝe *with* vs myhten be
this pes forto enden feythfulle,
and to discuren to the kyng
what that Js owre conseillyng;
and we after ȝoure conseil wil do,
what so evere belonge *þer*to."

but desire Ulfin to be their helper and spokesman.

Whanne the kyng herde hem axen this,
Semblaunce of gladnesse he made, j-wys,
and seide to vlphyn with wordis sadde:
"A riche man j haue the made,
ek norsched, and wis þou art *þer*to;
*þer*fore with hem schalt þou forth go
and conseille hem as thou best can,
For j holde the a ful wys man."
thanne seide vlphyn to the kyng:
"Sire, j ȝow warne of on thyng:
that kyng ne prynce owhte not to be
to famulyer with his meyne,
Nethyr to lowliche he scholde hym make
the hertes of his men forto take."

The king gladly

tells Ulfin to join the barons.

Ulfin passes a remark on princes and their courtiers.

thus wente vlphyn to cownseil anon,
and alle the Barowns everichon.
and whanne ensembled they weren jn fere,
thanne axeden they of vlphyn there
what hym thowghte best to do.
thanne seide vlphyn hem vnto:
"wel weten ȝe that the kyng
on vs hath put alle manere of thyng.
Now *þer*fore to the lady let vs now gon,
to weten ȝif that sche so wyle don!"
thanne wente they forth anon jn hye
to *þat* lady & to hire conseil, trewelye,
and tolden hem of the kynges wylle,
how he ensured was hem vntylle
and forto holden hym fully agre,
what ende so they maden, Sykerle—
"*þer*fore we comen to weten of ȝow here
ȝif ȝe wylen don jn that manere."

Ulfin goes with the barons.

He wants them first to ascertain whether also the duchess will hold herself bound by their decision.

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The counsellors of the duchess having taken the matter into consideration,

thanne answereden they, with-owten faille,
here-vppon it were good to taken consaille,
and seiden anon hem be-twene
that in better cas myht it not bene
thanne þe kyng to putten it on his lordynges,
bothe high and lowh, of alle manер of thinges.
"what myhte the kyng bettere do?
þerfore, lady, concenteth ȝe þerto!"

the duchess agrees,

So that this lady with-owten More
Concented to here conseille thore.

and assurances are given on both sides.

thanne was þere mad Siker assuraunce
on bothe partyes, with-owten variaunce.
thanne to conseyl gonne þese barowns gon,
and ech of other enqwered anon;
thanne eche man his avis gan seyn.
Anon of vlphyn axeden they pleyn
how him thowhte be here avys.

Then Ulfin says:

"Sires, riht ful wel, as men of prys!
Now myn avis j schal ȝow telle,
and ȝe welen lestene to my spelle.

"You know that the duke was killed innocently, [leaf 111 b]

wel weten ȝe the dewk ded was
be the kynges strengthe jn that plas,
And trespaced non thyng, As J ȝow seye,
jn non cawse, that he scholde deye,

his wife is left with child,

and that the lady Js left with childe,
and þerto hire londis ben mad bothe bare and wilde,
and therto a good womman sche is, Sikerle,
welful of wysdom and of Bownte.

and his kinsmen have suffered great losses;

More over the dewkes kynnes-men also
Ful mochel harm & los han cawht þerto.

hence compensation must be given.

and þerfore me Semeth ryht good Resoun
that the kyng hem make Restetucioun,
So that here love he myhte have
and jn his lond to dwellen more save.

On the other side, our king has no wife;

On the tothir side ȝe knowen Echon,
that owre kyng ne haveth wyf non,
So that me semeth be myn avys,

6019. MS. *hem.* 6022. *ȝe* added above the line.
6023. *ȝe* through correction, daubed.
6036. *jn*, *j* through correction.

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the kyng ne may not wel mendyn thys
lasse thanne hire to his wif he take,
and thus hire amendis forto make;
the wheche schal torne hym to honour
and of al his rem to haven favour;
For whanne they heren this jlke pes,
they welen hym loven, with-owten les.
and þat the dewkys dowhter wedden they wolde
To the kyng of orkanye with plente of golde;
and alle þe Remenaunt of his meyne,
Ful wel agreed scholen they be,
so þat they scholen holden hym for a ryht wys kyng,
and him loven and worschepen aboven alle thyng."

therefore he ought to marry the duchess.

Her daughter might be married to the king of Orkney."

"Now haven ȝe J-herde what J kan say;
now ech man his avis tellith, j ȝow pray,
whethyr that ȝe welen concenten therto
as j have here J-seid, owthir oþer-wyse do."
thanne answerid they alle anon ageyn:
"we concentyn therto, Jn certeyn,
For the beste conseille thow hast J-told
that ony man myhte Seyn jn this mold!"
"ȝet seyn ȝe not j-now," quod vlphyn tho,
"but welen ȝe alle concenten therto,
and ȝif ȝe seyn so everychon,
thanne with this answere forth wele j gon.
ȝe sen wel þe kyng of orkeneye js here;
on hym schal stondyn mochel of my matere."
Thanne tolde vlphyn his avis
To-Forn the kyng and alle his.
whanne the kyng herde this acord,
anon he answerede and seide þis word:
"what that evere on me that ȝe seye,
J schal neuere breken this pes, Jn feye!"
and whanne the tothyr partye herden this,
they helden hem ful agreed, j-wys,
and comen to the kynges tente,

All consent,

and praise his counsel.

The king, in the presence of his people, is informed of the proposed conditions,

and accepts them.

6041. *wif* added above the line.
6068. *ād*, corrected afterwards from *an*.
6070. *seide*, MS. *herde*.

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Then all assemble.

and the lady was aftyr sente,
and alle tho that at thike conseyl were,
anon to-forn the kyng they comen there.
thanne, whanne assembled they weren Echon,

Ulfin rehearses the conditions of peace.

vlphyn there stood vp Ryht anon,
and amonges hem alle declared this pes
Jn Every poynt, Er that he wolde ses,
and axede of þe barowns, *with*-owten faylle:
"was not this now 3owre consaylle?"

These are accepted by the duchess's party,

Anon therto they acordeden alle,
boþe that weren jn tente oþer jn halle.
thanne seide vlphyn to the kyng:
"how sey 3e be this acordyng,
thus to Maken these good mennes pes
and Ek the ladyes here neuertheles?"

avowed by king Uter,

"3is," quod the kyng anon tho,
"and the ladyes and here frendis concentyn þerto."

[leaf 111 c]

"More Over We ben Acorded Jn fere
that kyng Loth of orcanye, that Js here,
that the dewkis dowhter he schal wedde,
and as a qwene to his lond ben ledde."

and supported by king Loth of Orkney.

thanne answered kyng loth ageyn,
and seide to hem there ful pleyn:
"Sires, non thing scholen 3e bydden me do,
that j wele gladlich concentyn þerto,
So that to the kynges honour it be
oþer profyt to his crowne, certeynle!"

The duchess's people

thanne Spak vlphin to þe toþer partye,
that on þe ladyes Side weren, trewelye,
wheche weren ferst pytows & of hevy chere,

weep for joy,

and aftyr for joye they wepten there.
and the same that answerede vlphyn thore,
vnnethe myhte speken, he wepte so sore,

praise the amends,

and seide þat þer was neuere kyng ne kayser
That bettere amendis Myhte Maken ther.
thanne wente the cownseil and þe lady jn fere,
and amonges hem they seiden there
that ther was neuere non Erthly Man

and extol the king's justice and truth.

that bettere amendis myht Maken than.
"For so just and trewe we knowen þe kyng,

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that we welen acordyn to this ENdyng!"
and thus thanne was knyt vpe the pes
on bothe partyes there, with-owten les.
thus wedded vter pendragown
Ygwerne, as tho was RESown,
EVene vppon þe twentythe day
after that with Ygwerne jn hire chambre he lay.
and EK the same day j-wedded was there
kyng loth of orcanye with MERye chere;
and vnder on feste bothe weren they holde
with MAnye knyhtes bothe worthy and bolde.

The two royal weddings take place on the 20th day after the king's nightly visit at Tyndagel.

Thanne thus the kyng Ygwerne hadde,
and to bedde with hym was ladde—
Tyl that sche barnesched wondir faste.
so that þe kyng hire axede atte laste,
and a NYht, as the kyng be hire lay,
there thus to Ygwerne he gan to say:
"hos is this child, MY lady MIlde,
that ȝe gon with so grete with childe?
For MYn ȝe knowen may jt not be,
Sethen j ȝow weddede, ful sikerle;
For jn scripture J-put it Js,
as often as J ȝow knew, j-wys.
And with the dewk with childe not ȝe be,
For hym Syen ȝe not, ful Sikerle,
MAny day to-forn that he ded was;
with ȝow ne cam he jn non plas."
and thus the kyng hire chalanged tho,
whiche browht Ygwerne jn MOchel wo.
so there anon, ful sore wepyngge,
answerede Igwerne to the kynge:
"NOn lesyng Schal j MAken, Sekerle,
what so EVere that ȝe don by ME;
and that on ME ȝe haven MERcye,
For sekerly j ne Schal not lye;
and MOre over forto ENsuren ME
that ȝe ME Refusen Jn Non degre!"
"seyth on," thanne quod the kyng,
"and j wyle graunten ȝow ȝoure askyng;

When Ygwern's condition begins to be noticeable, the king says to her:

"Whose is this child?

It cannot be mine,

nor yet the duke's."

Ygwern weeps,

declares that she will tell the truth,

and implores his mercy.

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The king promises Ygwern not to reject her.

so what so Evere that ȝe Me telle,
For nothing ȝow Forsaken j Nylle."
Anon whanne that Ygwerne herde this,
Ful joyful thanne was sche, j-wys.
" Sire, of Merveilles J schal ȝow seyn,
and the sothe tellen ȝow ful pleyn!"

[leaf 111 d] Ygwern tells of the nightly visit

Thanne Anon gan sche to telle
how that aventure be hyre gan falle.
sche seide, a Man, with-owten variaunce,
to hire cam Jn hire lordis Semblaunce,
And with hym tweyne of his knyhtes
Jn here owne Semblaunce owt-Ryhtes—
"jn whiche of alle Men lyvenge

in her bedroom.

My lord thanne trosted ouer alle thynge.
and so jnto My chambre Entred he,
that al My Meyne it dyde þere se.
And so with Me he lay that Nyht,
For My lord j wende it hadde ben Ryht.
So that Nyht conceyved J was
with this child, swich was My gras;
and that same Nyht My lord was slayn,
This wot J wel, Sire kyng, certayn."

The king requests her to keep the matter quiet,

thanne, whanne the kyng herde hire so telle,
anon to hire he seyde ful snelle:
" loke that ȝe kepen this preve
From alle the peple jn cristiente.
and ȝif that ȝe that thing discure,
to ȝow it is schame, J ȝow Enswre.
For wel ȝe knowen, ȝoure lordis jt Nys,
Ne Myn Nethyr, with-owten Mys.

and to let him have the child, as soon as it is born.

Therfore J preye ȝow, graunt it to Me,
anon as hit is j-born of the;
and that ȝe wolde don My comandement,
To deliueren hit to whom þat me list, verament."
" Sire," quod thanne this lady so fre,
" what Evere ȝow list, ȝe mown do be Me,
and of Me haven al ȝowre wylle,
what that Evere ȝe seyn Me vntylle!"

6168. *variaũce*, the second *a* through correction, large.
6175. *lord* corrected afterwards from *lor'*.

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On the Morwe tolde the kyng vlphyn anon
of alle these Materis, how it dyde gon.

The king tells Ulfin.

Thanne answerede vlphyn to the kyng:
"now Mowen ȝe knowen Jn alle thing
that ȝowre qweene is bothe trewe and wys,
for of Erthly wommen sche berith the pris.
Now wete ȝe wel sche doth not lye,
Ne non blawndise Jn hire konne ȝe spye.
and þerto hauen ȝe wel sped the Nede
that ȝe hyhte Merlyne Jn othir stede,
that thike same child he scholde have,
were Jt a Maiden oþer were Jt knave."

Ulfin praises the truthfulness and wisdom of the queen,

and the prudent measure taken by the king.

So Jnto vj Mownthis Jt abod stylle,
Tyl that Merlyne cam vlphyn vntylle,
and with vlphyn spak Jn prevyte
of swiche thinges as desirede he.
thanne desirede Merlyne ouer al thyng,
Er þat he wente, to speken with the kyng.
And whanne asembled they weren Jn fere,
thanne tolde the kyng Jn his Manere
to Merlyne the wordis of the qweene,
and what Resouns betwene hem hadde bene.

After six months, Merlin comes to Ulfin

and to the king.

thanne answered Merlyne anon ageyn
To the kyng there, Jn certeyn,
& saide þat—"vlphyn hath wel agreed þe pes
of the dewkis deth, with-owten les;
but of My Gylte am j not clere,
that j hire deseyvede Jn swich Manere,
and wot Neuere hos that child Js
with wheche sche goth, with-owten Mys!"

Merlin is satisfied with what has been done, so far,

but wishes to expiate his own accomplicesliip in the deceiving of the lady,

thanne seide the kyng: "ful Sykerle,
Merlyne, J wot, so wys that ȝe be,
that ȝow ȝe welen aqwyten ful wel;
this knowe j sekerlych Everydel."
"ȝe Mosten me helpe," quod Merlyne, "þerto!"
þe kyng seide: "gladliche that wyl j do,
for wel wot j the child Moste ben ȝoure,
hit Forto Norsche and to socowre."
Anon spak Merlyne to the kyng than:

and desires the king's aid to that end.

[leaf 113 *a*] "There is in this country," says Merlin, "a passing good man (called Antron, l. 6520, or Ankor, l. 6472), with an excellent wife.

"Jn this contre there Js A passing good man,
on the beste of thy region here,
and therto a good womman to his fere,
the wisest and the moste discreet,
For of alle vertwes sche is repleet.
but hire lord js not þe moste richest man,
therefore, sire kyng, not forthan
J wolde that ȝe aftyr hym sente,
and of ȝowre goodis him ȝeven, veramente!
For his wyf jn gesyne doth lye
of a knave child, sire, ful Sekerlye.
and that ȝe myhten him so plese,
that jn tyme comeng he myhte ȝow ese
this child to kepe and to norrye,
that hym deliuered schal ben, sekerlye,
and þat his wyves mylk Sowkyn hit may,
and hire owne child to ben put away
Forto sowken Som othyr womman."
thus seide merlyne to the kyng than.
thanne anon to merlyne seide the kyng:
"As thow wylt, hit schal ben Jn alle thyng!"
thanne merlyne, his leve he took anon,
and to blayse his maister he gan to gon.
and the kyng sente aftyr this good man,
lyk as this Storye tellen ȝow kan.
So whanne this goodman to cowrt was gon,
the kyng, with hym there mette he anon,
and with hym gret Joye gan make,
where-offen merveille þe good man gan take,
that the kyng of hym so mochel made,
and why that with hym he was so glade.
"Now, goode dere frend," quod the kyng,
"Herkene now to myn talkyng.
Nedis j moste discoveren to the
a thing that Js of gret prevyte:
of an aventure þat js me befalle,
J schal the tellen ende and alle.
and as thow art my lige man,
So be myn helpe Jn that thou kan,

Send for the man, and give him of your goods, that his wife, who has just had a son, may take your child, and send her own out to be nursed by another woman."

The king sends for the man, welcomes him heartily, and says: "I must tell thee a great secret, for I want thy help

6244. MS. *comēng*.

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and conseyl to kepen hit to 3owre powere, and thy discretion.
and it neuere discuren fer ne nere!"
To the kyng thanne seide this good man tho:
"Sire, 3owre comaundement schal j do,
and to my powere hit fulfille,
what so evere 3e sein me vntylle."
"Thus me dremede this oþer nyht," I dreamt the other night
Seyde the kyng thanne to this knyht, that thou art a very good man,
"that thow were one the goode man
whiche is dwellyng jn my kyngdam.
And so me thowhte on cam to me,
and merveilles me tolde, certeynle:
Ferst that to me 3e been trewe lige man,
and that a child on 3owre wif engendred 3e han, and that thy wife has just had a child.
the whiche child, J-born it Js,
as he me tolde, with-owten mys.
So that man comaunded me Thou wert to send thy own
þat jn alle wyse J scholde preyen the child away,
that thy chyld owt scholdest þou do
To som oþer womman and norschen it so.
And thy wyf anothir child kepen scholde, and let thy wife take
and there-with to have plente of golde, another child instead,
the wheche child to hire schal ben browht; which will be brought to her."
but there-offen the peple may weten nowht.
Now do this, bewsire, j preye to the,
and ful wel thy mede j-qwyt schal be!"

Whanne that the goodman herde this,
anon to þe kyng he answerede, j-wys: The man replies that it seems a wonderful thing,
"of a wondyr thyng 3e axen me,
that me semeth a3ens nature scholde be,
my chyld to Sowken ony oþer womman
but his owne modyr that bar hym than.
3yt Nevertheles, Sire, this Wyle J do: [leaf 112 b]
asayen 3if þat my wyf concente þerto. but says he will speak to his wife,
And 3it of on thing J wolde 3ow preye:
whanne þat child scholde be born, me for to seye, and inquires when it is to be.
and whanne Jt scholde be browht to me;
of this wolde J knowen the certeinte."

6289. MS. þ^t *owt do*, with *owt* crossed out afterwards.

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The king can give no particulars,

than answerede the kyng ful snelle:
"sire, thereoffen the soþe can j not telle."
Anon answerede aȝen this good man,
and to the kyng there seide he than:
"what thing jn this world ȝe comaunden me,
J wyle it don, that may plesen the!"

but makes fine presents.

thanne ȝaf hym the kyng gret ȝiftes thore,
For whiche this goodman abascht hym ryht sore.

The man goes home.

And hom to his wyf he goth ageyn,
and of alle this mater telleth hire ful pleyn,

His wife likewise finds the demand strange.

whiche sche jt thowhte a straunge thyng:
hire owne child owt to putten jn Norscheng,
and sche anothir child to susteyne & fynde;
this thowhte þe lady it were aȝens kynde.

But the man urges their duty to their king,

thanne answerede this goodman ful mildely,
and seide to his wyf, that was hym by:
"there is non thyng that longeth hym to,
but nedis for owre lord we mosten Jt do.

also the king's presents

and þerto so moche tresor and Fe
he hath vs ȝoven, dame, certeynle.

and promises.

more ouer vs hath he behoten to do
what thyng that vs behoveth also.
and þerfore j wele that we fulfylle
Jn alle thinges the kynges wylle.
and ȝit more ouer j wyle also
that certeyn, wyf, ȝe concenten herto!"
thanne answerede anon this goode wommman,
and to hire lord & souerayn seide sche than:

The wife submits implicitly,

"my sovereyn," sche seide, "ȝowre owne am J,
and so Js also this chyld, trewly,
and there-fore with vs do ȝe ȝowre wylle,
For ȝowre comaundement am j redy to fulfille.
for on thing J hote ȝow now certeinle:
aȝens ȝowre wille schal j neuere be,
as ferforth as j have wyt oþer konnenge!"

and they make preparations for receiving the child.

thanne reioysched this goodman Jn alle thynge,
and preyde his wyf ful tendirlye
that a norse to geten hire Jn hye
here child to norschen with honour,
So that he myhte kepen both tyme & owr,

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that whanne the tothir to hym were sent,
he redy to ben purveyed, verament.
thus this goodman thanne purveyed was
his child to ben norsched Jn honest plas.
And also the kyng Sawgh be his qwene
that hire delyveraunce sone scholde bene.
And also the day to-forn hire chyldyng
thedyr cam merlyn, with-owten lesyng,
and prevyliche spak with vlphyn there,
and to hym seyde Jn this manere:
"vlphyn, J alowe ful mochel the kyng,
that so wysly hath ordeyned for this thing."
And thanne to the qweene he bad hym go,
& not to taryen, with-owten wordis mo,
there to ȝeven warneng of hire childyng
and ek of hire delyveraunce, with-owten lesyng,
that Sekerly deliuered scholde sche be
on the morwen aftyr mydnyht—"as j telle the;
ek that thow comaunde that lady so bryht
that child to deliueren anon ryht
To the ferst man that they konnen fynde
atte the halle dore there stondynge."
And whanne vlphyn herde hym speken so,
Ful sone axede of hym vlphyn tho:
"Wylt thow not spekyn With the kyng?"
"No, sire," quod merlyne, "with-owten lesyng!"
Anon to the kyng vlphyn cam tho,
and hym tolde how merlyne wolde do.
Anon as the kyng herde this,
wel mochel joye he hadde, j-wys.
"Ne wyl not merlyne with me speke,
Er from this cowrt that he gynne reke?"
thanne answerede vlphyn to hym ageyn,
and seide: "sire kyng, no, Jn certeyn;
but doth as he hath comanded ȝow,
For it wil tornen to ȝoure prow!"
Anon the kyng cam to the qwene,
and of prevyte spak hem betwene:
"dame, of on thyng J schal warnen the:
that myn comandement fulfyllen ȝe."

6352 6356 6360 6364 6368 6372 6376 6380 6384 6388

The queen's time draws near.

Merlin comes to Ulfin,

and wishes the queen to know that she shall be delivered next day, after mid-night,

and that she must hand over the child to the first man found at the hall door.

[leaf 112 *c*]

Ulfin informs the king.

The king speaks to his spouse.

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"worthy lord," quod the qwene tho,
"3oure comaundement now wyl j do."

The king repeats Merlin's prediction

"To Morwen aftyr the Mydnyht,
be the helpe of god almyht,
thanne delyuered scholen 3e be,
as j 3ow seye now Sykerle.
and of on thing J 3ow preye:

and command,

that whanne Jt is born, be ony weye
To on of 3owre prevyest wommen
that anon hyt be delyvered then,
and that sche take that chyld so kynde
To the ferste Man that sche doth fynde;

and enjoins secrecy,

and that 3e comaunden that persone
that thedyr with that child doth gone,
that sche 3ow discure jn non degre,
how that of chyld deliuered 3e be.

to keep people from talking.

For thanne the peple wolde seyn
Jt were neuere Myn, Jn certeyn;
No more it were lyk so forto be,
Faire lady, sethen that j wedded the."
"Sire kyng," quod this lady thanne,
"Ho hit Engendred, j not what Manne;

The queen promises to obey.

þerfore wyl j don 3owre comandement,
as womman that is schamed, verament,
of the grete Mis-aventure
that to me is happed, j 3ow Ensure.

She wonders, however, at the king knowing so well of her delivery.

but of on thyng sore wondryth Me:
to myn deliueraunce 3e ben so preve."
"Now j 3ow preye," quod þe kyng tho,
"algates My comandement that 3e do."
"3is, worthy lord, with-owten stryf,
3if so be þat god graunte Me lyf!"

Thus departyd bothe kyng and qwene
of the conseyl that was hem be-twene,
and the qweene abod þere goddis grace.

Next evening, the queen feels the throes.

So that on the Morwen, jn that place,
at Evensong tyme of the belle,
jn hire wombe felte sche throwes ful snelle,
and travailled forth al that Nyht

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jnto þat owr as the kyng tolde hire ryht.
so that be goddis helpe delyuered sche was
aftyr midnyht, as happed the cas.
And anon as that child was þere bore,
a prevy womman clepyd sche to hire thore,
and Seide: "com hydyr, my dere frend,
do take this child bothe Faire and hend,
and bere Jt to the halle dore anon,
and there a man schole ȝe fynden son.
For what man so evere he be,
this child hym deliuere, j preye the.
And that man that ȝe wel beholde,
Of What manere of kynde He ben scholde.
goth now and doth as J ȝow preye!"
"ȝis, Sikyr, lady!" this womman gan seye.
this womman took that child anon,
and jnto riche clothes sche dede it don,
and so browht hit to the halle dore,
where as a ful old man fond sche thore,
that onlovely was of Face & lere,
and seide: "Sire, what bydest thou here?"
"J abyde that thou hast me browht,
For ellis hydyr hadde j comen nowht."
"what answere schal j ȝeven my lady so dere,
to whom j have be-taken hire child here?"
thanne answerede hire this old man tho:
"what that j am, hast thou not to do,
but do that thou comaunded were:
deliuere me the chyld þat thow hast þere!"
thanne took sche hym this chyld anon,
and thussone from hire was he gon,
that sche ne wyst jnto whiche plase.
tho aȝen sche wente as comen sche wase,
and tolde the lady bothe word and ende,
how sche hadde delyverid þat chyld so hende
To ryht a passyng ful old man—
"but what he was, telle j ne can,
For as sone as the child he nam,
Syker, j ne wyste where he becam."
thanne was the qwene of hevy chere,

6428 6432 6436 6440 6444 6448 6452 6456 6460 6464

After midnight the child is born.

The queen tells a woman to take the child to the hall door, hand it over to the man whom she shall meet there, and notice carefully [leaf 112 *d*] what kind of a man he is.

The woman obeys.

At the door she finds an ugly old man (Merlin), who says he is waiting for what she brings.

He refuses to give further information, and disappears with the child.

The woman returns to the queen and tells her what has happened.

The queen is sad.

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and fulsore mornede & wepte there.
Merlin goes with the child to its intended foster-father, Ankor (or Antron),
but he that the chyld hadde tho,
ful faste jn his weye he gan to go,
Tyl that he cam to this good man,
that Ankor there was clepyd than.
who is just on his way to mass.
And as to masse ward as he wente,
god to Serven with good entente,
Merlin appears to Ankor in another shape: that of a nice old man.
thanne took merlyne a-nothyr Semblaunce,
of a fayr old man, with-owten variaunce.
Thanne clepyd merlyne that good man þere,
and seide: "Ankor, com speke with me here."
"j come to 3ow," quod Ankor tho,
"with good wille to speken 3ow vnto."
He gives him the child,
quod þis old man: "j have þe browht a chyld,
whiche that Js bothen mek and myld;
asks him to keep it well,
and that thow it kepe as richely
and as thin owne þou wost don tendirly.
loke that 3e don as j 3ow say,
and promises him great rewards.
and gret profyt schalt þou hauen, with-owten delay,
and ek thyn eyres encresyd scholen be,
as j the Seye, Sire, ful certeinle."
Ankor understands that the child is the one spoken of by the king.
"A," quod Ankor, "j trowe this be he
that the kyng spak offen to me."
"So is hit, Ankor, with-owten faylle,
as j the here telle jn consaylle,
For hit js the preyere of the kyng
and of goode ladyes, with-owten lesyng."
thanne took Ankor this chyld so fre,
that was so 3ong and ful of bewte,
and axede of this old man there
3if that this child owht crystened were.
Merlin tells Ankor to have it christened,
"Nay, but do thow it cristene anon
jn this mynstre, er thou ferthere gon."
thanne axede Ankor of hym tho
what name he scholde 3even hym vnto.
and to call it Arthur.
"Nemne hym Arthewr, j preye to the;
For mochel worschepe by hym schalt þou se
and ful gret encres to the and thyne,
and thow hit worschepe & hit propyne.
[leaf 113 a] So thanne vnnethis schalt thou knowe

Whethyr þou love him bettere oþer thyn owne."
thanne axede Ankor of this good MAN
what he was, and whennes þat he cam—
"And whom schal j sey that this child took ME?
of this, leve Sire, NOW preye j the."
thanne answerede this olde MAN ageyn:
"of me ne knowest thow no MORE, certeyn!"
and so departyd they asondyr RYHT tho;
thanne ECHE Jn his weye forth gan to go.
So that Ankor cristenede that child anon,
and Arthewr him clepyd þere thus son.
This MAN that Ankor here j-clepyd Js,
his propre NAME Js Antron, with-owten MYS.
thanne Antron to his wyf hyede ful faste
(that child hire to brynge hadde he gret haste),
and seide: "dere wif, lo, this chyld here
of which to 3ow j spak Thanne ERE!"
thanne answerede this goode lady anon:
"To ME, Sire, hit is RYHT welcom."
Anon this faire chyld took sche there,
and axede 3if hit cristened were.
he seide: "3e, dame," thanne, "certeinly!"
thanne took sche the child and leide it hire by,
and dyde hit Sowken of hire pappe anon,
& hire owne to NORRYE putte owt thus son.
thanne longe aftyr lyvede vter pendragon
with REste and pes Jn that REGYOWN.
So atte laste thanne hit be-fylle
that the GOWTE cam hym vntylle,
and hym held bothen Jn hondis and feet,
So þat be non wyse hit NOLDE hym leet;
Jn whiche MENE while, as j 3ow say,
his ENEMYES vp aryveden on a day,
and jn his lond dyden gret owtrage
and EK to his peple ful gret damage.
thanne sente the kyng to his barowns anon,
and cownseilled with hem EVERYCHON,
preyeng hem with al his MYHT

Ankor asks Merlin who he is.

Merlin gives no information about himself.

The child is christened,

taken to Ankor's home,

and well received by his wife.

After this, king Uter lives happily for several years.

Eventually, he gets the gout,

and is attacked by enemies.

He summons his barons.

6515. *so*, MS. *se*.

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hym to helpe avenge jn his ryht,
and to-gederis they wolden gon,
as trewe lordis for here kyng scholde don.

The barons promise their help,

Anon they seiden, with ryht good wylle
his preyere thanne they wolde fulfylle.
thanne reden these lordis forth anon,

and encounter the enemies,

and *with* here enemyes they metten thusson,
that a gret partye of the lond
they hadden j-treted jnto here hond.
thanne this meyne vppon þe kynges side
with here enemyes asembled that tyde.

but are defeated.

Anon thussone j-scomfyt they were,
and mochel of here peple losten there.
whanne this bode was browht to þe kyng,

The king grieves.

thanne jn his herte made he morneng.
so they that leften of the bataylle,
to the kyng they comen, with-owten faille.
and the tothir partye enforsede hem faste,
So that furthere jnto the lond ben they paste.

Then Merlin arrives.

Thanne merlyne, that knew of alle this thyng,
Ful faste he hyede hym to the kyng.

The king, filled with joy and hope,

Anon as Pendragown merlyne þere say,
Ful mochel joye made he that day,
and thowhte of merlyne comfort to haue,
be wheche his rem he hopede to Save.
And whanne that merlyne to-fore hym cam,

welcomes him,

anon be the hond he hym nam.
thanne merlyne hym axede of his chere,
why that he thanne so hevy were—

[leaf 113 *b*]

"ȝyt Wel J Wot that syk ȝe be,
and fulsore afrayed, as thinketh me."
thanne answerede Pendragoun aȝen tho:

and tells him his distress.

"merlyne, ful good encheson j haue þerto,
For myn owne men mi lond distroye,
that j wende wolden me nowht anoye,
and slayn my men þere jn bataylle,
that litel j wende wolde me asaylle."

"Battle without a head cannot be," says Merlin.

"Now," quod merlyn, "here mown ȝe se
þat bataille *with*-owten hed may not be."
"Thanne, for goddis love," quod the kyng,

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"Merlyne, conseille me now of this thing!"
Anon seide Merlyne to hym ageyn: — Merlin continues:
"on thing j schal telle the for certeyn,
whiche word trewe proved schal be,
3if that thou now wilt leven me.
Do semblen alle thy peple anon, — "Assemble thy forces,
and that to-gederis that they fast gon.
Anon as they ben sembled jn fere,
thanne do the ordeyn an hors bere, — go with them on a horse litter,
and to bataylle with hem thou go
a3ens thyn enemyes, þat thou do so.
For wete thou now wel, jn certeyne,
hem schalt thou ouercomen, ful pleyne. — and thou shalt be victorious.
and whanne thou hast don this bataylle,
thanne scha[l]t þou wel knowen, with-owten faille,
what vaylleth the Lond þat js lordles,
whanne hit hath nede rankewr to ses.
A3ens the Lond that hath Sovereyn,
hit lyte avaylleth, j telle the pleyn.
and whanne this bataylle thow hast j-do, — After the battle,
herk me now what j sey the vnto:
departe thy good Jn dyvers manere — distribute thy goods for the benefit of thy soul,
For thi sowle, whiles þat þou lyvest here,
and to the pore 3yve thou thy tresor.
& why j seye, wilt thou se wherfor?
For j hit knowe wel jn my mynde
that þou myht not longe lyven be kynde. — for thou canst not live long.
therfore j wele that þou schalt knowe
of hem that grete goodis han be rowe, — Whoever leaves great riches behind,
and deyen, and leven hem behynde,
& vppon here Sowles haven [not] mynde
that to departen jn here lyvenge
to pore jn here Sowles fortherynge,
j sey, that good after here departyng,
hit nys not here, with-owten lesyng, — gives them up to persons who care but little for his soul.
but here it is, & moche more therto,
that for here sowlis litel wil do.
For wete þou wel with-owten dwere

6600. MS. *fchat.* 6616. MS. *haven mynde.*

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The devil will appear to thee. He appears more particularly to rich people who do not give, while they are still alive.

that þe devel to the schal apere,
and specyaly to hem that han tresor,
that to powre wil not depart to-for,
whiles that they ben on lyve here;
hit vailleth hem not, *with*-owten dwere.
and þou that Nedis Mostest here deye,
j the warne, Sire, now certeinlye,
Thy good departe, thy soule to save,
Jn hevene blysse the joye to have.

The joy of this world is nothing.

For the joye of this world here
a3ons that js nowht, in no*n* Mane*re*.
and for why, j schal tellen to the,
3if that þou wylt now lesten to Me:

It fails.

jn this world hath no*n* Man so gret joye,
that hit ne schal faylle and hym anoye;

But heavenly joy lasts.

and jn the tothir js joye Endeles,
that Evere is dureng, & schal neue*re* ses.
and ho that disseise Suffreth here,
To him jn hevene js Restored there."

[leaf 113 *c*]

Each man of property must do something to earn everlasting life.

"Thanne Moste Eche Man Jn His Degre,
that God to hath graunted lond o*þer* fe,
loke that he purchase Jn this lyf here
the lyf Evere lastyng Elleswhere.

All the more thou, whom God has sent so great wealth.

than thou, that hast so Mochel Richesse
of tresowr, of Goold, an of prowesse,
and al God hath sent the by grase,
bethenk the in how lytel a spase!

I have loved thee long;

J haue the loved ful Many a day,
and 3it J do, *with*-owten delay.

but who loves thee so truly as thou oughtest to love thyself?

but ho loveth the so trewelye
as thou thy-self owhtest, pleynlye?
J have the told hit vndirfonge:
aftir this victory lyvest þou not longe.

All is in vain, if the end is not good.

For alle þe thinges that þou kanst Make,
Nis but a good Ende forto take.
and thowh alle þe good þat þou Myht do,
but 3if thin Ende be good therto,

6638. *ne* crossed out, but dotted underneath.

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Ellis art thou Jn weye of lesyng,
Forsothe j the telle now, sire kyng.
and thowgh [thou] alle thy lyve hast lyved mys — Even after a sinful life,
and put thy sowle Jn gret distres, 6664
thanne, ȝif that thyn Ende good be, — If the end is good, all shall be forgiven.
Forȝevenesse getest thou, sekerle.
Also j do the to vndirstonde
that nowht berest þou owt of thi londe— 6668 Nothing takest thou with thee from earth except devotion and alms-deeds.
but onliche worschepe & almesdede,
owt of thy lond schalt þou not lede.
For almesse *with*-owten worschepe do
aȝens god ne vaylleth not a slo. 6672
Now j have declared thy lyvenge;
and thi qwee*n* Js ded, with-owte lesenge, — Thy queen is dead,
and Neue*re* oþ*er* schalt thou haue Non,
but wha*n*ne þou of this world dost now gon, 6676
Thy lond with-owte*n* Eyr most abyde. — thou hast no heir,
therefore to thy-self loke at this tyde, — therefore think of thine own soul.
and loke, be thy sowle wel that thou do,
Er that this world thow passe now fro. 6680
thus from the, Sire, wile j now gon,
For More with the have j not to don;
And Sey to vlphyn that he Me leve, — Tell Ulfin to believe in me."
For here-aftyr he schal it preve!" 6684
thanne vter pendragou*n* spak ageyn: — The king inquires further about the horse-litter,
"Merlyne, me thowhte J herde ȝow seyn
that j jn an hors bere to ben save
aȝens Myn Enemys & victorye have. 6688
but, *Mer*lyne, j prey the, telle Me here — about the good deeds he is to do,
how god to ȝelden & what Manere."
"Syre, j the Sey, Make thou good Ende,
and tha*n*ne to blysse thy sowle schal wende. 6692
Fareth wel, non lengere J tarye with the,
but after þe bataylle thou thenk on Me."
Thanne axede vter Pendragon — and after his son Arthur.
aftyr ȝonge arthewr, that was his son. 6696
Thanne answered Merlyne to hym tho:
"Of hym hast thow not now forto do,

6663. MS. *thowgh all*. 6668. *owt*, *t* added above the line.

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Merlin tells the king that Arthur has become a handsome, well-bred young man.

For he is become a fair 3ong Man,
and Mochel Norture forsothe he kan."
Thanne axede the kyng hym hertyle
3if Evere his sone he scholde owht se.
"3e," quod Merlyne, "ones, Jn fay,
and Neuere More aftyr that day!"

After Merlin's departure, the king summons his forces, goes with them in a horse-litter,

Thus departyd Merlyne and þe kyng,
as j 3ow seye with-owten leseng.
the kyng let Somowne his ost anon
vppon his Enemyes forto gon,
and let hym leggen jn on hors bere,
as 3e to-fore herden telle here.
thanne there thus sembled batailles two,
[leaf 113 d] And Mochel Harm Was there J-do.
So that be the cownseyl of here kyng

and wins the battle.

of here Enemyes hadden they conqweryng,
and of hem Slowen ful gret plente,
that ful gret deol it was to Se;
And the Rem was set Jn Reste and pes,
& Neuere aftyr jn his tyme non distres.
thanne thowhte the kyng of Merlynes Sawe,
that to the deth ward scholde he drawe.

He then goes to London, and distributes his goods amongst the poor,

Anon faste to Londone he gan hye,
and sente aftyr his Tresorye,
and jn his Rewm he delt jt faste,
whiles his lif Jn Erthe dyde laste,
and gret almesse to powre dyde he
with his owne hondis, Ful Sykerle.

and by the advice of Holy Church, keeping nothing for himself.

and the Remnawnt of vn-Mevable good
that jn his Lond bothe lay and stood,
aftyr the cownseille of holy chirche
he hit disposede, there-with to wirche.
and thus his good departyd the kyng,
that to hym-Self he lefte non thyng
where-offen he myhte haven Remembraunce,
that he Jt ne delte (swich was his chaunce)
For the love of god & his Modyr dere
Be Merlynes cownseyl Jn this Manere.

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Fvl meek and bonewre was the kyng
aȝens god and the world, *with*-owten lesyng;
and also to the peple of holy chirche
Evere ful humbely can he wirche.
So that thus longe Syk he lay,
Tyl that hit happede vppon a day
that al his peple j-sembled were
at the cyte of londone alle jn fere,
and for his deth made gret morneng,
that so sone deyen scholde the kyng—
For they knew*en* wel, ful certeynlye,
That Nedis the kyng moste dye,
For of thre dayes he ne spak
To hem no*n* word, with-owten lak—
Thanne cam merlyne thedyr anon,
that alle these thynges knew echon.
tha*n*ne come*n* they to merlyn alle,
and tolden hym how it was befalle,
& how that the kyng was ded,
thus they hym tolde Jn that sted—
"whiche that ȝe loveden so wel,
and ek to ȝow was so good and lel."
"ȝe seyn not wel," quod *mer*lyne tha*n*ne,
"He ne may not deyen, so good a ma*n*ne,
That so good ende here doth make,
and so moche deleth for goddis Sake.
Neþ*er* hym-self nys not ȝit ded,
al-thowgh he seme as blw as led."
Thanne they hym tolde þ*at*—"he ne spak
thre dayes no*n* word, with-owte lak,
Ne neue*r*e schal speke*n* jn this world!"
thus to *mer*lyne seide*n* they with on acord.
thanne seide merlyne: "be goddis myht
J hym schal don speken this nyht.
Cometh now on, and Seweth me,
and hym speken scholen ȝe here*n* and se."
"tha*n*ne js hit the grettest merveille
that evere we Syen, with-owte*n* faylle!"
that jnto the chambre gonne*n* they gon,
and opened the wyndowes everychon.

The king is long sick.

His people are assembled about him.

When he has lain speechless for three days,

Merlin arrives.

The people say to him that the king is dead.

But Merlin replies: "A man who has done so much good, cannot die.

And king Uter is not dead."

The people say that the king cannot speak.

Merlin replies that they shall hear him speak once more.

They all go into his room.

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The people inform the dying king that Merlin [leaf 114, a] has come.

thanne seiden they to the kyng Jn fere:
"Lo, Sire, Merlyne Js comen to 3ow here,
That 3e Weren Wonted to loven so Wel,
and he hath 3ow hit qwyt Every del."

The king recognises him.

thanne to hymward tornede the kyng
with al his strengthe and his konneng,
and contenaunce Made there to Merlyne,
so that he hym knew ful wel a[nd] fyne.

Merlin asks the people to draw close to the bed-side.

thanne spak Merlyne to the peple anon,
bothe to temperal & speritwal Everichon,
and seide: "Sires, draweth 3ow now Nere
that desiren 3owre kyng to speken to here."
thanne axeden they Merlyne howhe that myhte be.
"Cometh," quod Merlyne, "and stondyth be Me!"

Merlin whispers into the king's ear:

Thanne wente Merlyne to the beddis hed,
and there to the kyng spak Jn that sted,
Softely Rowneng Jn the kynges Ere:

"Sire, a fair end hast thou Mad here,

"Sire, a fair Ende hast thow Mad here,
3if hit Jn thy conciense now be
as thy Semblaunce here scheweth to Me.
And on thyng J telle the Jn certeyne:

After thee shall reign Arthur, thy son,

that be goddis grace aftyr the schal Regne
Arthewr, that Js thy sone so fre;
of al this Rewm kyng schal he be,

and he shall fill the round table."

and he schal fulfylle the table Rownde,
whiche that be the now Js here fownde."
And whanne the kyng herde this,

The king turns round, and asks them all to pray for him.

Ful sone to hym ward he torned, j-wys,
and preide the peple Everychon
To God alle for hym to preyen anon.
thanne seide Merlyne anon with-al:
"this þe laste word that Evere speken he schal!"
thanne wondreden alle that weren there,
how that he spak Jn Swich Manere.

The same night, the king dies.

And so that Nyht he Made his Ende,
& to hevene blysse his Sowle gan wende.
Anon alle the prelacye of that lond

6784. MS. *afyne.*

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with alle the Baronage, as j vndirstond,
jn the most worschepful and reverent gyse
they hym beryeden as they cowde devyse.
So was that lond with-owten eyr.
And on the morewen to-gederys the[y] gonne repeir,
of holy chirche al the prelacye
and alle the Baronage, with-owten lye,
Jn a paleys that cristene hyhte;
there sembleden bothe clerk & knyhte,
and token cownseyl hem be-twene
how that the peple governed schold bene,
but Jn non wyse acorden they myhte.
thanne be-spak a ful gentyl knyhte:
"let vs alle be comowne asent
clepen merlyne to cownseyl, þat js present;
For he Js bothen wis and ek redy
good cownseil to ȝeven vs, trewely!"
So that thus acordid they alle jn fere,
and aftyr merlyne anon senten there.

The king is buried.

Next morning, the prelates and the barons

assemble to choose a successor,

but cannot agree.

They then resolve to send for Merlin.

Chap. VI.

Whanne that merlyne to-forn hem comen was,
to hym they seyden there jn that plas:
"For a wis man, Sire, we the knowe,
and oure kyng hast thou loved a gret throwe.
ek therto, Sire, thou knowest ryht wel
that governour han we neuere a del.
For a lond with-owten governour
may not endure*n* aȝens ony schowr.
wherfore, sire merlyne, we the preye,
al this hol cownseille, Sire, Jn feye,
vs to chesen swich a governowr
the prelacye to plesen, the rem to honour,
and jn Savacyoun of the peple also!"
Anon thanne merlyne spak hem vnto:
"J nam not worthy Jn non degre
Non swich maner thing to taken on me,
Nethir non governowr forto chese,
but be my wyt J schal don ȝow ese,

Merlin arrives before the assembly,

and is requested to find them a king.

He modestly promises to give them his advice. [leaf 114 *b*]

6818. MS. *the.*

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3if that 3e wilen acorden to me;
herketh now what my cownseil schal be!"
All declare they will follow Merlin's advice. they seiden to hym the[y] wolden asente,
alle the hole cownseyl, veramente.
"This newm J have loved," quod merlyn,
"and ek al the peple that Js there-Jn.
3e knowen ful wel al jn fere
"Your king died at Martinmas," says Merlin. that 3owre kyng now ded Js here,
which deide atte qwyn3yme of seint martyn
this knowen 3e alle wel and fyn.
"Christmas is coming, And hennes Jnto cristemasse
we ne haven but ryht a schort spasse.
and 3if 3e wilen don aftyr my cownsaille,
and I will tell you what to do. J schal 3ow Seyen, with-owten faylle,
God to worschepen, the world to plese,
and to 3owre hertes bothe joye and ese."
thanne seiden they alle to hym ageyn,
to hym they wolden concenten, certeyn.
"3e vndirstondyn alle ful wel
At Christmas our Lord was born. that now cometh the feste of nowel,
jn whiche the goode Lord was bore,
that savede hem þat weren forlore.
and as he Js lord over alle thyng,
ek aboven alle oþer he is kyng;
and as verrayly as a maiden hym bere,
of good cownceylle preye 3e him here!
If you pray to Him, with good and humble hearts, For j dar be borewgh, and 3e him preye
jn this manere as j 3ow seye,
and that eche man preye jn his degre
with good herte and jn hvmylyte:
lik as he was born Jn this feste,
to hear your prayers 3owre preieris to heren, of mest and leste,
and as kyng of kynges he was bore,
3oure Symple preieris to heren thore,
and as of alle thynges he is governour,
and to give you a king by some token, 3ow a kyng to chesen of honowr,
that at this Feste chosen myhte be
be som tokeneng that they myhten se,

6853. MS. *the*.

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the peple to governe and god to plese,
and ek the rem to setten Jn ese,
So that the peple knewen aryhte
that the Lecciown were be goddis myhte— 6892
and 3if 3e wylen don as J 3ow seye,
Som tokeneng scholen 3e haven, certeinleye!" you certainly shall have such a token."
thanne seiden they, so god hem Save,
Jt was the beste cownseil that they myhten have— 6896
"For there nys non man erthliche bore
that bettyr cownseille myhte 3even þerfore."
thanne alle the clergyse there anon The clergy ordain
thorwgh the rewm dyde notyse thus son 6900 prayers throughout the kingdom.
that Jn every chirche and abbeye
bothe riche and powre scholden preye,
what thorwgh here preyere and holychirche,
god to hem Som miracle scholde werche. 6904
herto acordid they al jn fere,
and merlyne of hem his leve took þere Then Merlin takes leave.
Jnto othir contres forto gon.
thanne axeden they merlyne anon 6908
3if that this thyng trewe scholde be.
"3e, j hope," quod merlyne, "Sykerle!
For no more nyle j comen 3ow to,
Tyl that the Elecciown be j-do." 6912
thanne wente merlyne to blayse jn haste, Merlin goes to Blasy.
and of these merveilles told hym faste;
And of thinges that to comen Were, [leaf 114 c]
To his maystir Blasye tolde he there. 6916
and thereby haven we now knowenge
of alle these materis, with-owten varyenge.
thanne anon alle the Barownye The barons and the
and also forth-with the clergye 6920 prelates go to London
To Londone wenten al jn fere
there forto maken here preyere,
and there abyden jnto cristemasse for Christmas.
jn here preyeris, bothe more & lasse. 6924
And Antron, that Norsched hadde Arthowr,
atte halwentyd with gret honour

6891. MS. *knowē Myhte aryhte*, with *o* corrected into *e*, and *Myhte* crossed out.

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Antron, who has had his son (Kay) knighted at All-Hallows,

his owne sone let dubben a knyht.
and Arthewr was woxen bothe strong & wyht,
and was past Sevene 3er old,
Ek þerto was he bothe wyhte and bold;
and his owne Sone he dide hym calle,
For so wende Arthewr it hadde befalle,
and that his fadyr he hadde j-be,
& thus wendo Arthewr, ful sikerle.

also goes to London with his children.

So that Antron to Londone gan go,
and with hym his children bothe two.

On Christmas eve, there is a large congregation,

Thanne vppon the Even of cristemasse
there sembled the peple More and lasse,
bothe the clergye and the baronage
and Manye a Man of hygh parage,
to fulfille Merlynes comaundement,
that he hem bad with good Entent.
For but Symple lif ledden they there,

praying steadfastly to God for a ruler.

and fulstedfast weren jn here preyere
To God for swich a governour
the cristene to defende Jn Eueri schowr
and cristes lawe to Meingteigne,
The lond to Goverme and to susteigne.
And thus abyden they, tyl Masse was don,
gret Multitude of peple and Manion.

Some, however, consider such prayers foolish.

And Some seiden that Folys they were
Swich Maner of preieris to Makyn there.
"what, wene 3e," quod somme, "that God almyht
here kyng to chesen down wolde alyht?
lo, these folis wenen for here preiere
be Miracle a kyng to hauen here!"
thus the Masse there gan he Synge,
a ful holy man, wel faste preyenge.

Before mass, a holy man addresses the people: "You are assembled here

and 3it Er that he the Masse bigan,
To alle that peple spak he than:
"Here Jn this plase assembled 3e ben
For thre Skelis, as 3e schole Sen,
and for 3oure profyt Everywhare,

for the weal of your souls,

and which they ben, J schal 3ow declare:
Ferst for the hele of 3oure sowles alle,

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and aftyr for 3oure worschepe, how so befalle,
The thrydde to knowen oure Lordis Myht,
that God to 3ow wile schewen be Ryht
of the Eleccyown of oure kyng,
thys to sen be 3oure preyeng,
which schal ben 3oure gouernowr and lord
and holy chirche to sosteyne in good acord,
which to vs alle it is Sustenaunce
and vs defendith from Manye hard chaunce.
Now sethen we ben alle Ensemblyd here
a kyng to chesin Jn this Manere
of on of 3ow, which so that it be,
but so wise be 3e not in non degre
to knowen whiche were most profytable
owþer this lond to gouerne most were able,
and for that we ben Jn nown certein,
þerfore to crist let vs preyen, ful pleyn,
that is of alle kyngges the kyng,
so that vs graunte Owre preieng,
Swich A Governowr that We Haue
Oure londes to Meinteigne and to Save!"
and thus diden the peple, with-owten faille,
lik as this goode Man hem dide cownsaille.
thanne to Masse wente he forth anon,
also Faste as he Myhte gon,
tyl that the Masse was atte Gospel,
and aftyr they offreden wel and lel,
and owt of the chirche thei gonne to isswe
Jnto a voide place, this was ful trewe.
and be that tyme the day gan dawe,
where-offen the peple was Ryht fawe.
Anon the peple of this Rowte
Ful besyly Lokeden hem abowte,
and behelden where that a foure-qwartered ston
that there lay toforn hem Echon.
but of what Maner ston that hit was,
there knew no Man Jn that plas.
Somme there seiden hit was Marbil gray,
and somme seiden oþerwise, with-owten delay.

for the worship of God,
and for the election of a king.
Now, since we are to make this election,
and because our own wisdom is insufficient,
let us pray to Christ!"
[leaf 114 d]
The people pray,
attend mass,
and issue out of church at dawn.
Outside, they behold a square stone of unknown description.

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In the middle of the stone is an anvil,

and in þe Middis of this ston behelden they tho
a *mer*veillous Stythy, with-owten Mo,
as thowgh a smythis Styth it were,
half a foote of heythe, with-owt*en* dwere.

in the middle of the anvil is fixed a sword.

and jn þe Middis of this Styhthy þ*er* was
a Fayr Swerd pyhte Jn that plas
thorwgh the Stythy Jnto the harde ston,
that they hit Syen there Everychon.

Those who first behold this sight,

And wha*n*ne that they beheldyn this
that owt of þe Minstre ferst wente, j-wis,

return into the cathedral, and tell the archbishop.

Jnto the Minstre they Entred thanne,
and tolde hit anon to this holy Manne
that here Masse gan to Synge,
which was Erchebischop*e*, with-out*en* lesinge,
Of Orbrice, as tellith this storye,
and as hit is put into Memorye.
and wha*n*ne that the holy Man herde of this,

The archbishop takes holy water, goes to the stone, bows down devoutly, and discovers a golden inscription,

anon holywater tha*n*ne took he, j-wys,
and wente to the swerd *with*-jnne a throwe,
and therto obeysched hym wondirly lowe;
where as lettres of gold beheld he there,
that Jn this Manere Endyted were,
and seiden openliche declarenge:

to the effect that he who can draw out the sword, shall be king.

that swich a man schold ben here kynge
that owt of þe stethy the swerd myhte drawe,
he scholde be governo*ur* of lond and lawe;
For God wyle that hit so now be,
as schewyth be Miracle, & no*n* but he.

The archbishop tells the people.

and thanne this Erchebischop*e* anon
among*es* the peple schewid it thus son.

Ten laymen and five clerks are set to watch the stone.

thussone this ston Jn warde was pyt
of x worthy men, to kepen hyt,
and to fyve clerkis of hygh clergye
with the tothyr Meyne that ston to Gye,
and seiden that God ful mochel hadde j-do,
that swich myracle wolde schewe*n* hem so.

The others return to mass.

thanne in they went*en* anon to Masse

7005. Small erasure after *ston*.
7029. þ^e squeezed in afterwards.

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hit owt to heren, bothe More and lasse,
More-ouer to ȝelden god here thankynge,
and te deum laudamus thei gonne to synge.
And whanne that te devm was j-doon,
From the awter he torned anon,
and seide: "sires, now Mown ȝe se
that amonges ȝow somme goode men be,
that god here now thorwgh ȝoure preyere
To vs swich tokenynges hath schewed here.
wherfore here J comande ȝow alle
that, vppon what Man this lot befalle,
For love, for hate, neþer for Envye,
whethir to pore or to Riche it happe, trewlye,
that non Man aȝens this Elexioun ne be,
Sethen it is goddis wille, as ȝe mown se.
For Ho so contrarieth His signefiance,
J drede on him that he wil werke veniance!"

Thanks-givings are offered.

After Te Deum, the archbishop again addresses the people,

exhorting them not to oppose, on any account, him whom God shall choose;

[leaf 115 *a*]

for such opposition would be avenged.

Thanne forth this goodman his Masse gan synge,
ȝeving to god bothe lawde and preysinge.
and whanne the Masse was al j-don,
alle to that ston they wenten Echon.
thanne Ech of other gan to Enqwere
whiche that ferst Scholde assayen there
that swerd owt of that styth to drawe,
and to ben governour bothe of lond & lawe.
thanne acordid they to-gideris Echon
that of hem ne scholde assayen it non
othir thanne the Erschebischope schold chese,
Jn forveture his worschepe forto lese.
thanne began there ful gret discord
betwixen comunes, gentyles, and lord,
that to ony Enerytaunce hadden Ryht.
to that swerd they wenten with al here Myht,
which that ferst Myhte wynnen therto
vppon that Swerd his Myht to do.

After mass, all go to the stone.

It is decided that only those chosen by the archbishop shall try the sword.

However, such as consider themselves more privileged, are dissatisfied.

thanne seide therchebischope to hem agein:
"Amonges ȝow here, in certeyn,

7054. MS. *whethir or pore or to*, the last *r* corrected from *t*.

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The archbishop admonishes the people, saying that no one knows the pre-ordinance of God,

Nis non So wis ne non worthy
that goddis wyl here knoweth, trewely,
whiche of 3ow that he wyle chese,
othir wich of 3ow the stat schal lese.
but of on thing J dar 3ow wel say:

and that noble birth and wealth avail nothing here.

that Neythir gentrye ne Richesse this day
Ne schal not onlych his wille hauen here,
Sauf onliche god be his powere.
For, Sires, 3it j sey 3ow furthermore,
J trowe that he 3it ne be not bore
that this swerd here owt schal drawe,
To ben 3owr lord of lond and lawe."

All quietly withdraw from the stone.

thanne acordedyn they alle, with-owten faille,
anon to that Erchebischoppis cownsaylle,
and withdrowen hem thanne Everichone
From that swerd Ryht alle anone.

The archbishop weepingly commends their humility,

thanne wepe the Bischope for pure pyte,
thanne jn hem he sawgh swich humylyte,
and seide: "this Meknesse jnto 3ow Entred Js
be vertw of cryst, with-owten Mys!
and j wile that 3e knowen owt Ryht
that aftyr the wylle of god almyht
J wile werken, Sires, ful otterly,
Goddis wraththe to eschewen pleynly.

and asks them to wait till after the festival.

Abydeth tyl that this feste be do,
and the swerd to assayen schole we gon to."

So whanne this feste was J-past,

So they do.

To that swerd they wenten jn hast.

Then the archbishop says:

"Now, sires, beholdith here goddis Myht,
that he for vs hath wrowht aryht!

"When justice was first instituted, the sword was given to uphold it;

For ferst whanne crist ordeyned justise,
Sires, j 3ow seye, hit was jn this wyse:
be the spere and be the swerd
he ordeyned to Gouerne al Middillerd.
For the swerd was ferst betake,
holy chirche to defendyn from wrake.

now, by means of the sword, our election shall be made.

and here be the swerd is oure Electioun,
this Reem to Governen al and Som.

7102. *Goddis*, *G* through correction.
7116. *Som*, *S* through correction.

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and therfore good cownseyl that ȝe make — Let the rich be humble,
ho that this wile on hym take,
be he Neuere so hygh, prowd, oþer Riche,
and thowgh he seme non man him liche.
loke ȝe pore men ne ben not wroth, — the poor forbearing.
thowgh that the Riche to ȝow ben loth,
thowgh they assayen the swerd to-fore,
For grettere thanne ȝe they ben & worthiere more.
For vnknoweng hit is to ȝow alle — Nobody knows on whom the lot shall fall!"
ȝit on whom the lot schal falle,
whethir on Lord, knyht, or sqwyer,
On powr, comown, oþer on bacheler,
or which of ȝow alle kyng schal be,
hit is ȝit vnknowen, ful Sykerle!"

Thus anon acordid alle that Ensemble — All approve of the archbishop's words,
To therchebisschope, ful Sekyrle,
with-owten ony Rankewr of herte;
there was non word that hem asterte;
but ho so wolde, scholde hit asaye, — and make generous concessions.
thus acordid they alle, with-owten delaye.
thanne assentyd they Everychon
To what lord therto wolde gon,
and to whom þat God wolde senden his grace,
openly to ben schewyd jn that place.
thanne Retorned they al jn fere
To therchebisschope anon there,
and ij .C. & .L. they chosen anon — First 250 nobles are chosen to try the sword,
of the worthyest, that Myhte gon
Forto asayen there here Myht,
On whom that god wolde schewen þe Ryht.
but amonges hem ne was þere non — but none can move it.
þe swerd to remeve owt of þat ston.
So thanne wente alle opere in fere — Then the others who are present, try it,
of comunes, of powre Men, þat weren there,
Forto asayen what they Myhten do.
but al availled hit hem not a slo, — likewise in vain.
For Remeved hit myht be for non Man;
Swich Miracle God gan schewen than.
So that hit was comanded jn hast

[leaf 115 b]

Finally, ten men are appointed to guard the sword, with orders not to prevent anybody from trying it.

To .x. worthy men to kepen Jt fast,
and that they Scholde non Man lette
hit to asayen, ho that myht it fette
and forto taken it owt of þat ston,
That he were Markyd Ryht anon.

Fruitless trying goes on for a week.

So that thus the swerd asayed was
.viij. dayes to-gederis Jn that plas.
and whanne Eche Man hadde asayed his Myht,

Then the archbishop holds forth the power of God.

Thanne seide therchebischope anon Ryht:
"Now Mown ȝe alle wel vndirstonde
that this is werk of Goddis sonde,
For power of this swerd hath non man, pleyn,
but hym that God hath chosen, certeyn!"

The people vow they will not leave the town, till they see the issue.

thanne sworen they alle jn that place
that owt of thike town they wolde not pace,
Tyl they wyste the victorye ho scholde have;
thus Sworen they alle, so god hem save.

thanne, whanne the Masse thus was j-do,

All go to their lodgings.

Eche Man to his ostage gan forto go.
and whanne thei hadden Eten Everychon,
to this swerd they wenten alle anon,

Then a tournament is got up,

and þere Eche Man torneyed with oþer,
þe sone aȝens fadyr, brothir aȝens broþir.
and Evere behelden these .x. worthy Men
Ho that the swerd scholde beren then.

and the ten guardians look on

more ouer thei beheld the gret Tornaye,
how Eche man his Myht gan there asaye.
(So happede that antronys sone þat Tyde
knyht was Mad in armes to Ryde,
at halewyntyd to-fore þat hygh feste
of cristemasse, as hit lyht in geste.)

with the rest.

and the sothe to tellen, ful Sekirle,
al that town wente to that torne.
and whanne þat tornement begonnen was,

Sir Kay calls on Arthur to fetch his sword from their hostel.

that sire kay clepid arthewr jn þat plas.
"dere brothyr," seyde sire kay anon,
"That to owre ostage ȝe wolde gon,
and that my swerd ȝe bringen to Me,

7175, 7181. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.
7186. *hit*, *t* on erasure.

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how so euere hit happe, j preye to þe."
  thanne arthewr, þat was ful Servisable,
Forth took his weye, with-owten fable,
As faste prekende As He myhte Ryde,
hom to his ostage that jlke tyde.
and whanne to his ost that he was gon,
Nethir man ne womman fonde he non,
but alle weren they gon, with-owten delaye,
Forto Sen that grete Tornaye.
So whanne his brotheris swerd he myhte not gete,
Ful tendirly the teres he dide down lete,
and so wepyngly he torned ageyn,
Tyl þat to-fore the mynstre he cam, ful pleyn,
and sawgh that swerd where hit stood
Faste jn þe ston, & þerto he 3ood,
For toforn asaied he neuere that game
The Swerd to geten to haven a fame.
For 3if the swerd he myhte arere,
To his brothir he wolde hit bere.
and assone as he gan asaye,
the swerd he gat with-owten delaye,
and vndir his lappe hit kepte preve,
and þer-with to his brothir he gan to fle.
  and whanne sire kay sawh hym komenge,
a3ens his brothir he gan to flynge,
also faste as he myhte ryde,
his swerd to haven at that tyde,
and seide: "Brothyr, J 3ow praye,
3eve me my swerd, & not 3e delaye!"
"now certein, brothir, j ne have hit nowht,
but here anothir j have 3ow browht."
and from vndir his cote he drowh it owt.
Anon he hit knew, with-owten dowt,
that the same swerd hit was anon
whiche tofore þe mynstre stood jn þe ston.
Anon he thoughte þanne, with-owten lesyng,
that be that swerd he scholde be kyng.
thanne comaunded he his brothir arthewr anon

Arthur rides home to the hostel, [leaf 115 c]

but finds no one at home,

and, to his great distress, cannot get at the sword. In returning past the cathedral, he sees the sword in the stone,

thinks that he may take that instead,

gets it out easily,

hides it under his lappet, and hastens to his brother.

Sir Kay meets him,

receives the sword, recognises it at once,

and resolves to make a deceitful use of it.

7202. *grete*, *r* corrected from *e*.
7209. MS. *ffortoforn*.

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Kay sends Arthur to fetch his father.

aftyr Antron his Fadyr Forto gon,
where þat Evere he Myhte hym gete,
and þat for non thing he scholde lete.
So longe wente arthewr, that he him fond,
and Forth hym þere browhte be þe hond.
thanne, whanne Sire kay his Fadyr beheld,
where as he hovede vndir his Scheld:
"Lo, be-hold, fadyr, j schal be kyng;
This swerd to Me is good tokenyng.
For this same stak Jn the ston,
whiche han asayed hyt ful Manyon.
So that Thus is now my destene
that Nedis be this swerd kyng moste j be!"

When Antron arrives,

Kay shows him the sword, and says he hopes to be king.

Antron is surprised,

And whanne the Fadyr beheld al this,
Ful Mochel Merveille he hadde, j-wys,
and axede Sire kay ful pleynly
how he thike swerd þat he cam by.

and asks Kay how he came by it.

Kay answers that he took it out of the stone.

anon he him answered, & not forsook,
That owt of the ston he hit took.
and whanne that Antron herde this,
he hym belevyd non thing, j-wis,
but seide pleynly he Made Gabbyng,
hym forto tellen ony swich thing.

Antron does not believe him.

Father and son repair to the stone.

So forth they wenten bothe jn fere
To-ward the Mynstre anon Ryht there.
and whanne that Antron Sawh the ston,
Ek also the swerd awey was Gon,
thanne seide Antron To his sone: "sire kay,
Loke that the sothe ȝe me now say
how þat ȝe komen now be this swerd;
Sey me þe sothe, and be not aferd.

Antron exhorts Kay to tell the truth,

[leaf 115 d] at the peril of being disowned

And ȝif ony lesyng ȝe to Me Make,
For ȝoure Fadir ȝe me neuere take;
and ȝif ȝe me Maken ony lesyng,
J schal hit wel knowen, with-owten fayllyng;

and forfeiting his love.

and þerto ȝow to loven neuere schal J
For non Man þat to me speketh, trewely!"

7243. *Thus*, *T* corrected from (a commenced) *h*.

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thanne to his Fadyr answerid Sire kay :
" Certeyn, Fadir, the sothe j schal ȝow say :
my brothir Arthewr me hit browhte,
whanne for myn he wente & fond it nowhte.
but j ne wot how that he jt wan,
Neþer howh he it gat, tellen j ne kan."
" Take me that swerd, sone, j the praye,
and anon j schal don hyt asaye."
This swerd, Sire kay to his fadir it took ;
thanne Antron ful son behinde hym gan look,
& sawh where Arthewr stood besyde.
Anon he hym clepede jn that Tyde :
" haue this swerd, sone, Jn thin honde,
and aȝen to putten hit thou hit Fonde
Jnto the same plase there hit ferst was,
ȝif that god wil graunte ȝow swich gras."
This swerd on honde Arthewr took wel sone,
and toward that ston he gan to gone,
and hit aȝen sette Jn the Same place,
as faste holdyng as to-forn hit wace.
thanne comandid Antron to sire kay, his sone,
To assaien that swerd þere Ryht anone.
Anon this swerd he gan to asaye,
but the grace was not to Sire kaye.
thanne to hym spak his Fadir Antron :
" this swerd took þou neuere owt of this ston ! "
thanne Artheur jn his armes Antron gan brace,
and seide : " dere child, and j mowe the purchace
of al this lond here kyng to be,
dere child, what reward wost þou ȝeven to me ? "
" Fadir, ony good that j may haue,
hit most ben ȝoures, what ȝe wilen crave,
as child to the Fadyr nedis most seyn,
ȝoures schal it ben al hol and pleyn ! "
" Sire," quod Antron to Arthewr jn hy,
" ȝowre Fadyr was j neuere, trewely,
but as be the weye of norture,
Ful certein, Sire, j ȝow ensure.

Kay confesses the truth.

Antron demands the sword from him,

and tells Arthur to put it back into the stone.

Arthur does so.

Then Antron commands his son to try and take it out.

But Kay cannot move it.

Antron is now sure, embraces Arthur, and asks what reward he shall have, if he makes Arthur king.

Antron tells Arthur that he is only his foster-father.

7285. *Artheur*, *t* through correction.
7295. *ntron* on erasure. 7302. MS. *ȝour'es*.

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Neþer ho the be-gat, j hit not knowe,
whethir he were man hy oþer lowe!"
Arthur weeps with disappointment, and whanne Arthewr this vndirstood,
That his Fadyr denoyede his blood,
he wepte ful harde teres smerte
For tendirnesse with humble herte,
and wonders how he, being of obscure birth, can attain such distinction. and seide: "dere sire, howgh may this be,
that swich good oþer worschepe scholde turne to me,
this or ony othir worldly thing,
Sethen ȝe me knowen not of myn e[n]gendryng?"
"ȝis, Sire, a Fadyr hauen ȝe be kynde,
what so evere j putte ȝow jn mynde.
Antron inquires again about his reward, in case Arthur should have that grace. but, Sire, and hit be þe wille of God almyht
That to this Grace ȝe comen be ryht,
and ȝif hit mowe be Fortheryd by me,
Sire, what schal thanne my mede be?"
thanne answerid Arthewr to hym welsone:
"What ȝe wilen desiren of ony bone."
Antron further relates of his wife's sacrifice, thanne sette on Antron also blyve,
and tolde Arthewr of al his lyve,
[leaf 116 a] And How His Norse that His Wyf Was,
and Norsched his sone kay Jn othyr plas,
and sook the mylk of a straunge womman—
"and my wyf ȝow Fostred, as ȝhe wel can;
Therefore to me, Sire, and to myn sone
ȝe owhten to Sen a good Gwerdone.
and of their joint tender care. For ȝow haue j Norsched as tendirly,
bothe J and my wyf, Sire, trewely,
as euere child Norsched myhte be,
j telle ȝow, sire arthewr, ful sikerle!"
Arthur implores him still to consider him his son. "thanne preye j ȝow," quod Arthewr thanne,
"lik as ȝe bien a worschepful manne,
That ȝe wolden not disnoyen me,
but J as ȝowre sone euere forto be.
For ȝif that ȝe wyle me thus forsake,
thanne wot j not how on to take.
and ȝif that God this Grace me sende,
to ȝow & to ȝowre sone j wil ben ful kende.

7316. MS. *Egendryng*; cf. *Efured*, l. 5998.

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For what thing that ȝe desiren of ME,
certein, Sire, grauntyd sone schal jt be!"
"Sire," quod Antron, "j ne schal axen non thing
That myhte tornen to ȝowre hyndring,
NEthyr ȝowre Lond, ne ȝowre RIchesse,
NE non thing that ȝow schal distresse.
But of on thing J wolde ȝow praye,
and that ȝe hit ME not with-NAye,
but that kay, MY sone, ȝowre steward be
alle ȝowre Londes forto over-se;
And thowh that he to ȝow forfete,
owthir to ony other, Jn Jre or hete,
Nethir for non trespas that he MAy do,
From that offys to putten hym fro,
but as longe as his lyf MAy ENdure,
of ȝoure stewardschepe to ben Sure.
And thowgh he be vnkurteys or vnkynde,
thanne jn ȝoure herte ȝe have jn MYnde
That of a-NOthir MY[l]k Norsched was he
thanne of his owne MOdyr, Sekyrle.
and þerfore Suffren him MOre ȝe MOste
Thanne to ony other, as J ȝow troste.
wherfore of this bone J preye to the,
and that ȝe wylen not wernen it to ME!"
Thanne answerid Arthewr ful sone anon:
"Alle ȝowre hole askynge j graunt Sone."
Thussone Antron took Arthewr anon,
and to the hygh awter þanne gonne they gon.
there Arthewr Swor on his Surawnce
that heste to holden, with-owten variaunce.
And whanne he hadde thus his oth MAd,
Thanne antron & sire kay weren ful GLad.
So toward the Torneye thanne gonne they gon,
but homward they comen EVerychon;
And that day fynysched was the gret Torneye,
So that toward the MYnstre they comen jn hye
There alle here EVensong forto here,

Arthur is willing to give his foster-father anything he shall choose.

Antron desires Arthur to make Kay his steward,

and to forgive his foster-brother any transgression,

remembering that the latter has had to drink another woman's milk.

Arthur gives the promise,

and confirms it by a solemn oath.

By this time, the people return from the tournament, and go to even-song.

7363. MS. *Myk.*
7367. *bone* added above the line.

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For 3it of thelecciou*n* they weren jn dwere.

Antron goes with his friends before the archbishop,

Tha*n*ne clepede antron his Frendis anon,
and tofore therchebisschop*e* go*n*ne they gon,
and Seyde: "Sire, here J 3ow praye,
Lesteneth to me now what j schal Saye.

and says that his son would like to try the sword before all the lords.

Sire bisschop*e*, j haue a 3ong Sone here
That Js no*n* knyht, and 3it wolde he lere
To asayen the swerd that Js Jn the ston
aforn these Lordynges here everychon.
Sire Bisschop*e*, of this he doth me preye,
Therfore the arende here J to 3ow Seye."

The barons are summoned.

Tha*n*ne clepyd were*n* alle the Barou*n*s to semble,
aforn that ston to aperen, ful Sykirle.
So wha*n*ne assembled they weren echon,
Antron to Arthewr tha*n*ne seide anon:
"Go forth, and asaye this swerd ryht here,
[leaf 116 *b*] Hyt Owt to drawen 3yf 3e ko*n*ne lere."

In the presence of all, Arthur pulls out the sword,

Anon Arthewr to this swerd wente
aforn alle the peple there presente,
and that swerd there pulde owt Ryht sone,
anon to the Byschop*e* there-with gan gone,

and offers it to the archbishop,

and offryd hit vpe jnto his hond
Toforn alle þe peple þ*at* there dyd stond.
The Bysschop*e* resceyved hit ful blyve,

who joyfully embraces him.

and ful joyful was in his lyve.
So that Arthewr jn his armes þ*er*e gan he brase
aforn al the people Jn that plase,

With song and ringing of bells, Arthur is carried by the clergy into the cathedral.

and Te deum lavdam*us* he gan to Synge,
Therto alle the bellys ano*n* go*n*nen rynge.
So thus to the mynstre they go*n*ne hym bere,
The Bysschop*e* *with* the clergye þ*at* was there.

But the barons are sad,

Tha*n*ne alle the Baronage that þ*er*e was,
Gret sorewe and morneng maden jn þ*at* plas,
and Seyden, certein, hit Scholde neu*er*e be,
a knave to be set Jn so hygh degre,

and disallow the election.

Neyther to ben here Sovereyn ne kyng;
They wolde hit Suffren for non thing.

7382. *dwere*, the first *e* added above the line.
7414. *Maden*, *M* corrected from *j*.

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Anon Therschebisschope wax ryht wroth,
For here wordis to hym weren ful loth,
and seyde: "Lordynges, wylen ȝe vndirstonde
Of hym that is kyng of See and Londe,
he knoweth bettere what is to done,
thanne alle the compenye of ȝow echone!"
Anon Antron and alle the comunes jn fere
To Arthewr anon assembleden there,
and the Barowns the contrarye helden anon
aȝens Arthewr and the comunes echon.
Thanne spak Therchebisschope with angry herte
wordys ful bolde, whiche þat hem Smerte:
"knowen ȝe wel, Lordynges here present,
That this Js holy owre Lordis entent,
how this persone only ȝoure kyng schal be
Of his owne electioun, Lordynges, Sykerle!
wherfore j schal ȝow schewe, er ȝe hyt crave,
what affyaunse jn god here-offen that j have.
Now go forth, arthewr, my sone so dere,
Goddys wyl to schewen among this peple here.
Goth and sette the swerd there as Jt was,
Openly to-forn the peple jn this plas."
anon arthewr with good herte and wylle
Therchebisschoppis wyl wente to fulfylle,
and pyhte the Swerd Jnto that Ston;
and also Faste hit there helde anon
as evere hyt dyde ony tyme to-fore,
as sad, as Faste, and al so sore.
and whanne thus that arthewr hadde don,
Thanne to hem seyde therchebysschope anon:
"A fayrere electioun neuere there was
Thanne God hath Schewed ȝow jn this plas.
Therfore goth now, bothe powre & riche, jnfaye,
vppon the Swerd ȝowre myht al to asaye."
anon asayed every man jn his degre,
but For hem alle hit wolde not be.
Thanne seide to hem Therschebisschope ageyn:
"now ben ȝe alle grete Foles, jn certeyn,
Oure Lordys wyl to contraryen here,

7420 7424 7428 7432 7436 7440 7444 7448 7452 7456

The archbishop angrily reproves the barons.

The commons assemble about Arthur, but the barons still oppose.

The archbishop censures them again,

saying that he will show them God's will.

He tells Arthur to put the sword in its former place.

Arthur obeys,

and the sword sticks as firmly as ever.

He then tells the others to try.

But all fail.

The archbishop then exclaims: "You are fools to oppose our Lord's will!"

7425, 7428. MS. *cōunès.*

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that jn hevene ne Erthe he ne hath non pere!"

The barons reply that they do not oppose God's will, but are annoyed at Arthur's low birth.

"Sire, we ne Erren not ayens Goddis wylle,
but of on thing hyt Greveth vs ylle:
that a knave here owre kyng scholde be
and over vs to haven the Sovereynte."
"Now, lordynges," quod therchebysschope thanne,
"he that js bothe God and Manne,
knoweth bettyr what js Forto done
[leaf 116 c] Thanne Alle the Compenye Of 3ow Echone!"

Anon whanne the Barouns herden al this,
Ful sore they weren abasched, j-wys,
They therefore desire the archbishop to let the sword remain in its place till Candlemass.

and besowghten the Byschope alle jn Fere
That thike swerd myhte stylle abyden there
Jnto the Feste Seweng of kandilmasse,
hyt there to asayen bothe More & lasse
that Neuere the Swerd assayede to-fore,
thanne here Myghtes to assayen thore.
The archbishop assents.

Thussone therchebisschope hem grauntyd anon
That al here askyng there scholde be done.
At Candlemass,

So whanne this Feste tho comen was,
The peple Gan semblen jn-to that plas,
people try the sword again, but ever in vain.

and hit assaieden there Everychon,
but of al that peple was there not on
That the swerd there owt taken Myhte;
hit was the lasse wondyr: they hadden non Ryhte.
Thanne Seyde the Bysschope anon Ryht to hem alle:
"Now knowen 3e what Ryht to 3ow doth falle,
therfore welen we now assayen Goddis wylle."
Arthur, at the word of the archbishop,

And anon to arthewr he seyde vntylle:
"Go forth now, Arthewr, My child so dere,
To schewen what God wyl don for the here;
and 3yf he wyle that thou here Lord be,
the Sword go take owt, now let se!"
Thanne wente forth arthewr Ryht anone,
draws it out as easily as if nothing kept it.

and that Sword pulde owt thussone,
and as lyhtly took hit jn-to his hand,
as thowgh non thyng hyt hadde withstand,
and took hyt to therchebisschope anon Ryht,

7459. MS. *ayeng.*

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Thankynge only God of his grete Myht.
Therchebisschope and the clergyes alle
beheldyn how this kas be-gan to falle.
They wepten alle for joye jn that place,
and only thankyd God of his grete Grace.
Thanne axede the Bysschope hem jn vyrown:
"which of 3ow May contraryen this Elecciown?"
Anon answerede the Riche Men ageyn,
and preyden the Bysschope, in certeyn,
3yt forto Suffren that swerd to stonde—
"Tyl hyt han assayed Mo Men Jn Londe;
that schal ben at Pask now next sewenge,
so longe to abyden, for ony thynge.
And 3yf at that tyme there be non Man
that thanne the swerd owt taken ne kan,
Ellis, Syre bisschope, be thin comaundement
hym wilen we obeyen alle, verament.
And but 3yf 3e welen granten vs this heste,
Elles Everyman let don his beste!"
"wylen 3e," quod therchebisschope thanne,
"with good herte obeyen, Everymanne,
and J hyt Suffre jnto that day?"
"3e, sire," they seyden alle, with-owten delay.
Thanne seyde therchebisschope to Arthewr tho:
"dere Syre, to the ston a3en that 3e go,
and Setteth the swerd there-jnne ageyn.
For of on thing j dar Seyen 3ow pleyn:
3e scholen neuere fayllen of that thyng
that 3ow hath behoten owre hevene kyng."
Thanne Arthewr styrte hym forth before,
and the swerd jn his place putte Ryht thore.
Anon was ordeyned be comaundement
That swerd to kepen tho, verament,
Ten worthy Men, and clerkys Fyve,
and fyve lower men of good lyve.
The swerd that tyme as faste there was
as Evere to-fore hit stood jn that plas.
Thus abod the kynges Arthewr Sacreng

The archbishop and the clergy weep for joy.

The barons want another respite, till Easter, and promise, if nobody else can take out the sword, then to acknowledge Arthur.

The archbishop tells Arthur once more to put back the sword.

Arthur again obeys.

Men are placed to guard the sword, as before.

7512. *alle* daubed.

Jnto the feste of Esterne next comeng.
[leaf 116 d] Therchebysschope Seyde to Arthewr thanne:
The archbishop exhorts Arthur to a good life, "thou schalt ben here kyng, here governour & Manne,
Therfore loke Evere a goodman that thou be
From this tyme forward Jn alle degre.
and advises him to choose his counsellors and retinue. and chese now whiche of thy conseyl scholen be,
and jn thin houshold to haven onest Meyne,
Evene as this day that thou were kyng alone,
lik as thou schalt be helpe of hevene kyng in trone."
" Sire," quod arthewr, " j wyle ful wel
jn Goddis ordenaunce putten me Echedel;
Arthur leaves this with the archbishop and aftyr 3oure cownseyl, Syre, wyle j do,
whethir hit me torne to wele oper wo.
and therfore Swich Meyne that [3e] me chese
bothe God and holychirche forto plese.
and Antron. And clepyth my Fadyr to 3owre counsayl,
For he is a Man that May mochel avayl."
Thanne clepyd the bysschope his fadyr Antron,
and bad with hym that he scholde gon.
thussone he tolde hym Every word,
how Artheur and he weren atte acord.
They choose two counsellors, thanne anon chosen they tweyne conseylleris
of worthy Men and gret perys.
That so be here counseyl, j vndirstond,
and make Kay steward. sire kay was Mad steward of his lond.
and alle the Remenant abyden stylle
jnto the feste of Pask with Ryht good wylle.
and whanne that feste was comen than,
To Londone they comen Every Man.
On Easter eve the barons are summoned to the archbishop's palace. Vppon Pask Evenen the bisschope forth Sente
aftyr alle the baronage, veramente,
Jn his paleys to Maken here Semble;
This was his wylle, ful certeinle.
Thanne axede he hem of alle here wylle,
3if to that chyld they wolden consentyn vntylle.
Thanne answeryd the Baronage ageyn:
" we wyl not contraryen, jn certeyn,
The wyl of oure Lord, hevene kyng.

7547. MS. *that me.*

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But vs *Mer*veilleth of this child so 3yng
and therto so lowe j-born of degre,
That Swich a pore *Man* oure kyng schold be."
"Now certein," quod the bisschope thanne,
"j ne holde 3ow none goode crystene *Menne*
To contraryen *Goddis* owne *Elecciown*,
that to 3ow here is schewed al & Som!"
"Syre, that wyl we not jn non partye,
a3ens Goddis wyl here not applye.
but Sethen 3e knowen of his degre,
and of his Byrthe 3e seyn, sykyrle,
Sire, to vs alle hyt Js vnknowe
and to alle this Baronye vppon this *Rowe*."
"thanne wyle*n* 3e lette*n* now hys crowneng,
at this tyme forto *Maken* hym kyng?"
"3e, Sire Bisschope, tyl we knowen *More*,
and we Scholen Seyn 3ow a skele wherfore.
Tyl we knowen bettyr what he Js,
and whens he cometh, with-owte*n* *Mys*,
Respyt we preyen of this Sacre,
3if that 3owre wylle hit myhte so be."
quod therchebysschope to that Baronage:
"*Now* knowe j wel alle 3owre owtrage!"
"*Nay*, Sire, non lengere thanne Pentecost
we hit not axen, with-owten bost;
and thus we preyen that 3e wolden do,
3if that 3ow lyke to consentyn therto."
vppon this quod the Bysschope thanne:
"we schole ben avysed *Every* *Manne*."
So thus departyd there that cownsaylle,
Arthewr to worschepe, þe baronage to dysavaylle.
So that vppon the *Morewe*, Aftyr *Masse*,
To the ston Arthewr a3en gan passe.
and that swerd he took owt fulsone,
lyk as to-fore tymes he hadde there done.
Thanne held they hym only For here kyng
with-owten *More* varyaunce other lettyng,
and preyden hym to putten the swerd jn ageyn

7572 The barons still take exception to Arthur's low birth,

7576

7580 wish for information on that point,

7584

and desire prolonged respite,

7588

7592

till Whit-Sunday.

7596

7600

[leaf 117 *a*]

7604 On Easter morning, Arthur, as before, takes out the sword,

7608

and puts it in again

7601. *cownſayll*, *a* corrected from *e*.

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There as to-fore Jt stood, *with*-owten leyn,
The barons ask Arthur to open his heart to them. and that to hem he wolde speke
and somwhat of his herte to hem breke.
"Sires, that schal j do with good wylle,
and 3e to ME wyl lestene vntylle;
and of what thing that 3e preyen ME,
J Schal Jt 3ow grawnten, Sires, certeynle."
They take him into the cathedral, Thanne ladden they hym to the MYNSTRE anon
To speken with hym there EVERYCHON.
"Sire, we vndirstonde Jn owre ENTENT
and say that they will acknowledge him as their lord and do him homage, That 3e ben owre Lord, verament;
and what 3e desiren from this day,
we wylen hit *per*formen, *with*-owten NAY,
and therto owre londes of 3ow to holde,
and homage to don 3ow ful MANYFOLDE,
but want to have the coronation postponed. of 3oure Sacryng 3if Respyt that 3e do
jnto pentecost, certein, with-owten MO;
and NEUERE the lasse kyng scholen 3e be,
and kepen 3owre stat, worschype, & dignete."
Arthur says he will receive no homage, "How Schold j," quod arthewr thanne,
"Homage Resceyven of ony MANNE,
Tyl J-Sacred Fulliche that j be
and jn MY stat at alle MANERE degre?
but will grant the postponement, But of the RESPYT that 3e me preye,
j wele not denyen hit Jn non weye.
3yt, that j schal not Sacred be,
Sires, j Sey 3ow now certeinle,
desiring nothing except by the will of the Heavenly King. That NETHYR kyngdom ne worschepe j desire
but be wyl of the kyng of the hygh EMPYRE.
And EK 3if that 3e consenten therto,
Ful moche the bettere hit MAY be do."
The barons praise his wisdom. Thanne answeryd the Baronage ageyn,
and of this chyld Seyden, Jn certeyn:
"3if he MOWE lyven and ENDUREN MAY,
[he] Schal ben RYHT wys, the sothe to say,
[F]or wondyrly he doth vs answere here

7632. MS. *degr'e.*

7644–46, 7652–56. The beginning letters were more or less damaged or destroyed through the leaf getting stuck to, and then pulled off from, the strip of parchment used for mending the preceding leaf.

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[j]n Every poynt, with-owten dwere!"
Thanne seide to hym the Baronage ageyn:
"Sire, of on thing we preyen 3ow pleyn:
Now at this pentecost 3e Sacred scholen be
and Resceyven 3owre crowne and dignete.
and with-jnne this Terme obeyen welen we,
To don 3ow homage, Servyse, and Fe,
[a]s owre Erchebisschope wyl vs telle;
we wylen werken aftyr his spelle."

The barons repeat their demand.

thanne alle ornementis browht they forth, sykirle,
That to a kyng belonged Jn alle degre,
Forto assayen Jn here Manere
3yf owht coveytous that he were.
Thanne axede this worthy Arthewr anon
of these Estates alle be on & on,
and what Eche Man was jn his degre.

The barons bring forth all the royal ornaments, to see if Arthur is covetous.

So that Good departed there anon thanne he,
and 3af bothe Riche Robes, gold, and Fe
To Erl, Barouns, & knyhtes, ful gret plente;
and the Gold and þe Sylver that hym browht was,
anon he departyd jn that plas
To sweche as hym thowhte best weren there,
So that Love he gat hym Every where.

Arthur liberally distributes clothes, gold, and silver amongst the worthiest.

Thus departed Arthewr His 3yftes Alle [leaf 117 *b*]
that to hym weren browht, bothe grete and smalle.
and whanne they syen hym of alle thinges so gent,
anon they Seyden Jn here Entent
That a worthy Man he Scholde be
and Neuere coveytous jn Non degre.
"But verrayly vs semeth Jn his avyse,
and he hadde Resceyved his dygnete,
that to hym gret grace scholde Resorte,
as Evere to ony Man that was of his porte.
For Every Man he Rewardyth aftyr his degre,
and Every stat Gwerdoneth ful pryncypale!"
And Neuere Evel tach jn hym they fownde
of alle that tyme Jn thyke stownde.

The people express their approval of his liberality and discrimination.

7646, 7652–56. See the preceding footnote.
7663. *gold* through correction.

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So thus the Sacreng there gan abyde
jnto pentecost, that holy tyde.

For Whit-Sunday, the people re-assemble in London,

Thanne Sembled they Echon ageyn
at londone Eftsones, J Sey 3ow pleyn.

and try the sword,

There the swerd a3en they gonne asaye
To pullen Jt owt, ho so pullen Maye.

in vain, as before.

but there was non Man jn that plase
That swerd to taken, ne hadde non grase.

The archbishop gets everything ready for the coronation.

Thanne therchebisschope anon Ryht
alle thinges aparayllede, j 3ow plyht,
Bothe corowne, Septre, and the sacrynge,
al this he ordeyned, with-owten lesynge.

On Whitsun eve, Arthur is knighted.

Vppon the whitsonne Even, satirday at Nyht,
therchebisschope took cownseyl at Barown & knyht,
and that nyht Artheur knyht was Mad,
Er ony More dignite that he had.
and that Nyht in preyeris lay Everyman,
Tyl vppon the Morwen that hit dawen began.

Next morning, in the cathedral, the archbishop

So vppon the Morewen, whanne hit was day lyht,
To the Maister chirche cam bothe barown & knyht.
Thanne bespak therchebisschope Ful sone:
"Sires, 3e weten what 3e han to done.
Lo, here this Man of Goddis chesing
To ben bothe 3oure Gouernour & kyng!

displays the royal emblems,

beholdith here vestures, and Robys Ryal,
and the corowne of this lond with-al,
Be the counseyl of Ryalis and of oper Mo
this coronacioun here forto ben do.

and inquires if any one opposes the coronation.

3it wolde j weten not For than
3if that here be ony Swich Man
that this Eleccion here wolde with-seye;
of this the sothe wolde j knowen, Jn feye."

All acquiesce.

thanne answerid they alle be on assent:
"we wylen he be crowned, verament."

The archbishop announces that Arthur forgives all that has happened.

"Thanne with this," quod the bisschope thanne,
"So he haue the hertis here of Euery Manne,
what a3ens hym hath be wrowht jnto this day,
he it to 3ow for3evith for Evere and ay."

The barons kneel,

Thanne knelyd they down al jn fere,

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and to Arthewr cryden Mercy there.
thussone a3ens hem he knelede vppon his kne,
and vppon hem he wepe for pure pyte,
Seyeng to hem there, fulsore weping:
"J for3eve to 3ow alle 3owre trespasyng,
and so j preye to God an hy
that he hyt for3eve, & so wyle J."
Thanne Rysen they alle be on assent,
and hym gonne Embracen with good Entent,
and him vp boren, and there forth ladde
there as the Robes the bisschope leyd hadde.
So thanne they hym vestured anon,
and the bischope thussone to masse ward gan gon.
Anon As the Bysschope there Redy Was,
To Artheur there cam he jnto that plas.
"Sire, to the Swerd now 3e Mosten go
and hyt vptaken, as tofore 3e han do,
wherwith holychirche defenden as a knyht
and also cristendom with al 3owre Myht."
Thanne wenten they forth on procession,
bothe prelates, lordis, and comunes Echon,
Tyl they comen there as the swerd was
Stekyng jn the ston jn the forseid plas.
Thanne seide therchebisschope to Artheur there:
"Lesteneth now to Me, and 3e scholen here.
3yf hit so be that thow wylt Swere
and to God avowen & his Modyr dere,
Ek to Petyr and Powl, Enswre thou Me,
and to alle Seyntes that jn hevene be,
holy chirche to susteynen jn hire Ryht
and pes jn thy Lond with al thy Myht,
Ek the vnconseylled forto cownseylle,
Thy peple to worschepe and avaylle,
To thy Power this schalt thou do,
and Ryhtful lawes to Meynteyne also,
with this com forth, take vpe this Sword,
whom God hath chosen jn this Middilerd!"
Anon so Arthew[r] herde al this,

and cry his mercy.
Arthur kneels also,
and weepingly says he forgives them.
All rise,
they embrace Arthur,
invest him with the royal robes,
[leaf 117 c]
and walk in procession to the place where the sword is.
The archbishop says to Arthur:
"If thou wilt swear
to sustain the Church, uphold peace,
be a help to thy people,
and maintain just laws, then come forth, and take up this sword!"

7734. *ward* added above the line.
7759. MS. *Arthew.*

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For pite he wepe, & many mo, j-wys.
Arthur swears, So that he there Swor be god almyhty
althis to susteyne *with* herte ful trewly—
"And be alle thynges that jn erthe be,
J schal hem Sosteyne jn my degre."
kneels down, with this anon Arthewr he knelyd adown
amonges al the peple that was jn vyrown.
takes up the sword, Anon the Swerd there vpe he took,
Seenge many man that on hym gan look,
and as lyhtly took hyt vpe ryht there,
as Jn the ston hyt not ne were.
bears it to the altar, So bar he the swerd forth jn his hond,
and to thawter they hym ladde, ȝe vndirstond,
and is crowned. and there hym Sacryd, with-owten dowte,
& as to here kyng they gonne to hym lowte.
Ek anoynt he was anon therto,
& alle that belonged to a kyng also.
After the coronation, the people leave the cathedral. Whanne this coronacion j-endyd was,
and the masse j-Fenysched be goddis gras,
owt of the mynstre alle wenten they anon,
and behelden there aftyr this Ston,
The stone with the anvil is gone! But they ne wyste where hit was do,
So sodeynliche aweye was hit hem fro.
And jn this maner Arthew[r] kyng chosen was,
as ȝe han me herd rehersyn jn this plas.

[leaf 117 *d*]

Chap. VII.

Thus Here-Aftyr the Storye Doth telle
what aftyr in kyng Arthewris cort befelle,
To Arthur's court come, with hundreds of knights, king Loth of Orkney, that aftyre his coronacioun the ȝer Sewenge
To his cowrt repeyrede bothe knyht & kynge.
To that court cam the kyng of orkanye
with Fyve hundred knyhtes jn his compenye.
king Uriens of Gory, Also thedyr kam þe kyng of gore, þat hyht vryens,
with Foure hundred knyhtes Jn his presens.
king Newtris of Garlot, thanne kam the kyng newtris Garlot,

7769. *ād* corrected from *as*. 7774. MS. *gōnne*.
7782. *was*, *w* corrected from *a*. 7783. MS. *Arthew*.
7784. The remainder of the column blank; in the left margin: *Coronacō arthur'*.
7787. *aftyr'*, *r'* squeezed in.

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that kyng Artheuris Sostir weddid, wel j wot,
and with him vij hundred knyhtes of pris.
And aftyr hym to cowrt þere kam j-wis
the kyng that was of Ryht Gorre,
that Carados of brebas hyht, Sykerle;
Therto he was knyht of þe table Rownde,
and with hym vj hundred knyhtes Sownde.

king Carados of Right Gory,

Aftyr hym kam kyng auguysyaax so fre,
that kyng of scotlond was, Sykerle,
a 3ong Man, ful hardy, & gret of prowesse,
with fyve hundred knyhtes, More ne lesse.
Aftyr hym to court kam kyng ydyers
with fowre hundred knyhtes stowt & Fers,
wel j-armed & harneysed owt Ryht,
Thowgh anon they scholde gon to fyht.

king Augwyaas of Scotland,

and king Ydiers (of Cornwall).

whanne these kynges were Sembled jn fere,
of hem gret joye Made kyng Arthewr there,
and Many grete festes he hem Made
with grete presentes & 3iftes to maken hem glade.
Every lord there aftyr his degre,
Grete jewelis he hem 3af, Sykirle.

Arthur is much pleased,

makes great feasts in their honour, and bestows ample gifts.

whanne these Barowns beheldyn al this,
the grete presentes and jewellis of pris
and the grete festyng that he hem Made,
anon there-offen dysdeyn they hadde,
and amongis hem-Self they gonne to say:
"we mown ben Sory to abyden this day,
To sen a knave of so lowe degre,
kyng of this Rem that he scholde be!"

In the barons, however, the old envy and pride are roused.

Anon his 3iftes they Refused Echon,
and streyht to the kyng wenten anon,
and deden hym wel forto vndirstonde
they ne held hym non kyng of that londe,
and boden hym faste thens to hye
owt of that lond Ryht Schortlye,
For but 3yf he wolde the lond forsake,
they wolden hym werche bothe tene & wrake,

They refuse his gifts,

disown him as their king,

and threaten his life.

7801. See Notes. 7815. MS. *beheldyng.*
7824. *wentē*, *w* corrected from *g*.

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and but ȝif he thus dede, sekerlye,
ellis to the dethward he scholde hye.
whanne kyng Arthewr herde here grete manas,
King Arthur must fly and be in hiding. thanne owt of strengthe of karlion gan he pas,
and there logged hym *prevyly* jn the town,
For mochel he dred hym of tresown;
where as he abod fyftene dayes,
þat but fewe wysten where, þe sothe to saye.
Merlin arrives. thanne happed it aftyr, as j ȝow telle,
that *Mer*lyn jnto *þat* town cam, as befelle,
and jn his owne Semblawnce aperede openlye,
For that of the peple he wolde be seye.
And thussone as they hym Sye,
Gretly they *Mer*veilled, Sekirlye.
The barons send for him, Anon the lordis aftyr him gonne sende,
and Merlyne ful gladliche to hem gan wende.
Anon as these Barowns Syen him comeng,
aȝens hym they wenten jn Metynge,
and of hym gret joye they made,
take him into a palace, and jnto a fair paleys they him ladde,
that stood be a reverys syde,
& jnto a fair Mede there *gonne* they byde.
[leaf 118 *a*] Whanne Jn that place that they Were,
anon Merlyn they aresownd there,
and ask his opinion of the new king. and this to hym was here askyng,
how that hym likede be here newe kyng—
"That therchebisschope of dover hath crowned here
aȝens oure leve Jn alle Manere."
Merlin greatly commends him. "Certes, lordynges," quod Merlyne tho,
"they myhte non bettere hauen j-do."
"what Mene ȝe?" quod the barowns thanne,
"how speke ȝe of this jlke Manne?
jn this Rem Many worthy lordis there be,
More worthy to ocupien that worthy degre
The barons urge Arthur's low birth. thanne a knave that noman doth knowe
whens he cam, of hygh *oþer* lowe!"
"ȝe Seyn as that ȝe thinken," quod *Mer*lyn,
"but now wylen ȝe heren of cownseyl Myn,
and vndirstondith what j schal Seye:

7838. *to*, MS. *ta*. 7867. *that* corrected from *the*.

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he is as hygh a born man, jn feye,
as the beste of 3ow that js here,
For here to his Fadyr þere nys non pere.
For Antronys sone nys non thing he,
Nethyr sire kay his brothyr nys, sikerle,
that his steward chosen is this day,
but only of norture, as J 3ow say."
"where-offen speken 3e?" quod þe barouns tho,
"moche more merveyl js this vs vnto."
"3e doth aftyr me," quod merlyn thanne,
"and j schal counseillen 3ow as j kanne.
Aftyr kyng Artheur that 3e don sende
Jn Ryhtful trews, as 3e ben hende,
and aftyr vlphyn, that worthy man
that cownseyllour was to Pendragon;
and aftyr antron that 3e senden also,
that kyng Arthewr hath norsched hedirto;
and thanne scholen 3e knowen al this thing,
holiche the begynneng and endyng.
And weteth wel, Lordynges, with-owten leyne,
that j make non lesyng to 3ow, jn certeyne."
Thanne quod [the] Barowns be on assent:
"we wylen fulfylle thin comaundement,
we wilen hym behoten, ful vtterlye,
Sauf to comen & to gon, certeinlye."
"Clepe forth Breteaus," quod merlyn tho,
"For this arende he Schal wel mown do."
thanne clepyd they forth Breteaus anon,
and to hym the Barowns seiden thusson
that thys arende he scholde do,
this jlke peple to bringen hem vnto.
thanne seide merlyn to Breteaus there:
"Ek therchebisschope of dover jn alle manere,
that he com forth in here compenye,
and ek the bisschope of londone, ful pleynlye."
"Sire," quod Breteaus, "this schal be do."
he took his leve and forth gan go,
and jnto that place he wente anon

Merlin informs the barons that none of them comes up to Arthur's father, who is not Antron.

Merlin further advises the barons to send for Arthur,

for Ulfin,

and for Antron,

in order to have matters cleared up.

The barons assent.

Breteaus (Bretel, l. 4879) is despatched,

with orders to bring also the archbishop who crowned Arthur, and the bishop of London.

7877. *3e* added afterwards above the line.
7891. MS. *quod Barowns.*

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Breteaus summons Arthur

where as kyng artheur he fond thusson.
"Syre kyng, the Baronage aftyr 3ow doth sende,
and therchebisschope of dover with 3ou schal wende,
the bisschope of londone, and Antron also."

and Ulfin.

and from thens Breteaus to vlphin gan go,
and seide that he Moste come to the Baronye,
also faste as he Myhte thanne hye.

The latter is delighted,

whanne vlphin of Merlyn herde Speken aryht,
thanne jn his herte he was ful lyht,
and ful gret joye he hadde thanne, Sykir[l]e,

knowing that the truth will be discovered.

for he wyste wel the trowthe discouered schold be,
al the Rote and al the Endyng
Of the Birthe of Artheur the kyng.

[leaf 118 b]

Thus Wenten they Forth Alle Jn Fere
To the barowns in the paleis there they were;

Ulfin and Merlin meet with joy.

and gret joye vlphyn of Merlyn Made,
and Ech of hem Mad othyr glade.

Arthur, the bishops, and Antron also arrive,

Thanne Arthewr and the Bysschoppes also
to-ward the paleys Gonnen they go,
and with hem Antron jn compenye,
also faste as they Myhten hye.

Arthur with a coat of mail under his clothes.

vndirstondith that Arthewr armed was ful wel
vndir his Robe with an haberiown of stel.
whanne to-fore the Baronage that he cam,
on Eche partye stood there Many a Man
Merlyne to 3even there good awdyence,
whyles that he stood jn the kynges presence.
and whanne the kyng they Syen comen, trewelye,

The barons go to meet them.

alle the Baronage a3ens hym gonne hye;
atte Reverence that Sacred he was kyng,
a3ens him they wenten jn Metyng,
and jn Reuerence of therchebisschope also
Ek a3ens hem gonne they go.

All take their seats, save the archbishop.

Thanne Seten they down Everichon,
Sauf only therchebisschope stod alon.

"Now, Lordynges, lesteneth what j schal say,
and beth wel avysed alle, J 3ow pray;

7917. MS. *Sykire.*

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and ek for goddis love and for charyte,
what j schal Seye, taketh kepe to me.
J 3ow preye for charyte,
of schedyng of blood 3e hauen pyte, 7948 "Have pity on Christian blood," says the archbishop.
whiche is cristene blood, as 3e wel knowe,
as wel of the hye as of the lowe.
and thinketh but on man that 3e be,
and assone here deyen Schole 3e, 7952 "Each of you is but one man, and the rich man dies as quickly as the poor."
& assone deyeth the Riche as the pore,
and of þe owr of here deth knoweth no more."
thanne quod the Barowns to hym anon that tyde: The barons
"Sire, we 3ow preye a whyle to abyde, 7956 request the archbishop first to let Merlin give his information.
Tyl we han spoke here with Merlyn
of certein thinges of his devyn,
and whanne declared to vs hath he
a thing that to vs Js vncerteynte, 7960
For sethen we comen jnto this lond,
of Sweche thingges cowde we neuere vndirstond."
the Bisschope Seide: "Seres, with good wylle, The archbishop agrees.
what that evere Merlyne seith 3ow vntylle." 7964
thanne sat þere therchebisschope a-down,
and Merlyne gan speke to hem jn vyrown: Merlin addresses the assembly.
"Now, Lordynges that ben here present,
what j schal Seyen, take 3e good entent. 7968
J schal 3ow declaren here ful openly He tells them of Uter Pendragon's fatherhip,
hos sone Arthewr was trewely.
weteth wel alle, Sires, now jn certeyn
that vterpendragones sone he is, pleyn, 7972
and on ygwerne he begat hym that nyht
whiles the dewk, hire Lord, was slayn in fyht.
And on the morwen, whanne he cam owt the king's promise to
From that Lady, with-owten dowt, 7976 Merlin
a bone j hym axede there anon ryht
of that he hadde begeten on hire that nyht,
For alle the Benfetes and my Servyse with regard to the begotten child,
that evere j hym dyde jn ony wyse. 7980
and he me graunted there anon
That al myn axynge scholde be don,

7958. *thinges*, *g* corrected from *h*.

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the sealed confirmation of the promise,

wher-offen lettres vndir his Sel
j haue to Schewen, bothe goode & lel,
whiche 3it kepith vlphyn, that is here,
and hym-self there was, wytnesse to bere."

"Whanne that Pendragon hadde weddyd ygwerne,
To barnesche with chylde sche wax full 3erne.
And so aftyr, hyt happede as j 3ow Seye :

the king's words to [leaf 118 c]

As jn bedde they lyen bothe tweye,
The King Hyre often gan to Repreve,

his spouse about her pregnancy,

and seyde : 'now, lady, be 3owre leve,
This chyld js neyther the dewkes ne myn,
how konne 3e this preven be ony devyn?'

the queen's shame

Anon thys lady abassched hyre Sore,
and kuere the lengere more and more.
whanne the kyng Sawh hire scomfyture
and hire schamfulnesse, J 3ow enswre,

and grief,

hym forthowht sore hyre hevynesse,
that he hadde hire put jn swich distresse.
And for so moche morneng by hyre he Say :
'dame, of on thing j schal 3ow Say :
Sethen hit nys not myn jn maryage,
kyng may he not ben after myn age.

their agreement concerning the expected child,

Therefore anon as that born hyt Js,
J 3ow cownseylle with-owten mys,
whom ferst 3e fynde atte the halle dore,
The child to ben deliuered with-owten more.'
And the goode lady hym grawntyd anon
that al his desyr scholde be don,
For that sche wolde jn non degre
that hire lord with hire wroth scholde be.

its delivery first to Merlin,

and thus, certein, whanne hyt was bore,
To me it was delyvered at the halle dore."

"And whanne delyveryd hit was to me,

then to Antron,

To Antron j wente, ful certeynle,
and this chylde there j hym betook,
and that of his wyf hyt scholde Sowk,
For deliuered sche was half 3er to-fore

7994. *3e* added afterwards above the line.

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of sire kay, hire sone, with-owten More,
that jnto anothir place was put to Norrye,
and Arthewr here forth sook, ful Sekerlye.
thus Sire kay Arthewris brothyr Js
be his modrys pappe, & *non* othyr, j-wys.
& this was kyng vter pendragounes preyere,
and so dyde sche, as j seye 3ow here,
and therto hit crystenede the same day,
and arthewr hit Nempned, as j 3ow say.
Therfore j seye 3ow, Lordynges, here,
God thinketh on his Man jn alle Manere,
that hym doth Servyse o*þer* ony honowr,
he hym forsaketh jn non Man*er* stowr.
More over, atte Reu*er*ence of so worthy a man
and of the kynde that he of cam,
God wyle here 3elden his Gwerdon
bencheson of the seed, be good Reson.
and weteth wel now, Jn certeyn,
that God the ston hyder sente, ful pleyn,
and the swerd there-jnne, as 3e Myht*en* se,
To p*ro*ven the sothe, ho that kyng scholde be.
and al this that j have seyd 3ow here,
Jt js Ryht trewe, as j 3ow lere.
Record of vlphyn, let hym now seye
3if that j varye jn ony man*er*e weye,
and also of Antron, that here js,
3if that in ony thing j seye amys."
thanne axede the Barowns jn *þa*t plase
3if hyt were trewe that seyd he hase.
they answeryd anon: "3e, certeinlye;
M*er*lyne jn these wordis ne doth not lye.
and 3if 3e wylen not vs beleven here,
lo, here the lettre patentis al jn fere
that kyng Pendragon betook to M*er*lyne
vndyr his owne Seal wel and fyne."
these lettres they token anon jn hye
to therchebisschop*e* to Reden by & bye;
and he hem Radde, as hyt gan falle,
on be on there toforn hem alle.
And Evene as Merlyne told hadde before,

and the bringing up of the child in Antron's house.

"Therefore," Merlin concludes, "God remembers his servant,

and has sent us the stone with the sword.

Now, let Ulfin and Antron say whether I swerve from truth!"

Ulfin and Antron confirm his words,

and the sealed documents are examined by the archbishop.

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[leaf 118 *d*] Openly to the Baronage He declared Hyt thore.
The people, greatly moved, side with Arthur, and whanne the comune peple herde al this,
anon for pyte they wepten, j-wys,
and cursede alle tho that ajens hym were
Jn ony degre here armes to bere.

And whanne the Barowns vndirstoden al this,
that the peple so with hym held, j-wys,
recognizing God's provision. and seyden that hit was be goddis chaunce
that his man he wolde so here avaunce,
But the barons declare they will have no bastard for their king. thanne bethowhte hem the Baronye
To speken of here kyng more velonye,
that for me Rehersed schal not ben here.
but they seyden that a bastard jn non manere
kyng of that Lond ne scholde neuere be,
Nethyr that Rem governe jn non degre.
The archbishop expresses his trust in God. Therchebysschope answeryd hem ful sone:
"sethen that god this Eleccyoun hath done,
he wyl hym leten for non maner of thing,
but hym Susteyne as a trewe kyng,
bothe jn his werris and his fyht,
he wyl hym susteynen as his owne knyht."

Now Arthur's adherents depart to his court, Whanne therchebysschope and the clergye
and the comown peple, Sekerlye,
herden the vntrowthe of the Baronage,
how Fers they weren and how owtrage,
To-gyderys they helden hem Everychon,
and toward Arthewrs court gonne they gon.
and the barons, and alle the Baronage departyd away,
Ful wroth and angry, the Same day,
with threatening words, and seyden: "now Every Man hym defende
that with Arthewr halt jnto the Ende.
For oure kyng schal he Neuere be,
we hym defye and his progene,
and al the helpe that he may haue,
be hym we not sette, so god vs save."
repair to their lodgings. Thanne to ostage wenten they anon
All arm themselves. and hem dyde armen there Everichon.
And Arthewr jnto þe Mayster towr wente

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with mochel peple *with* hym, veramente,
& there hem armede*n* jn that plase,
ek al the peple that with hym wase.
So whanne that alle assembled they were,
Sevene thowsend harneyssed were*n* they there ;
but of knyhtes hadde he but fewe,
Thre hundred and Fyfty jn that Rewe,
that Swore*n* his helpe Forto be,
Tyl deth hem departed, ful Sykerle.

Arthur has 7000 foot-soldiers,

and 350 faithful knights.

So whanne the kyng and his meyne
weren alle j-armed, Ful Sykerle,
they comen owt Anon of the towr,
here Bodyes to kepen From dolowr.
and the Baronage, as j haue told,
hom to here ostage wenten manyfold,
and harneyssed here men on hors to Ryde,
with the kyng to meten jn that Tyde.
So eche man assemblede to his Banere
of foure thosend knyhtes that were*n* there,
with Seriaunt*es* and arblasterys
and gret foysown of Sqwyers that were*n* ful fers.
whanne that alle assemblyd they were,
thanne axede of hem the Baronage there
3yf that the paleys thei wolden assaylle.
Somme seiden 3e, with-owten faylle,
and some seyden, to the Baylle they wolden go
and that besegen with-owte ony mo—
" that So we Scholen afferen hem with-jnne,
that jn non weye they Scholen owt wynne."
So that Whyles they Weren Jn this Talkynge,
Towardes hem cam merlyne faste hyenge,
and seyde : " Lordynges, what wyle 3e do ?
thinken 3e a3ens 3owre kyng to go ?
hyt schal be to 3ow more velenye
and gret hyndryng and los, ful Sekyrlye,
and swich veniaunce on 3ow schal falle,
that Fowlyche scholen 3e ben schamed alle,

The barons have 4000 knights with a huge force on foot.

They deliberate on an attack.

[leaf 119 *a*]

Merlin visits them,

and warns them.

8100. *ek* added in the left margin.
8121. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards. 8129. MS. *seyden*.

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and of 3owre londis disheryted to be,
For wrong to hym 3e thinken, sykerle.
and of the Eleccion that God hath sent
3e don gret wrong, Sires, verament."

But they scoff at his words. "behold," quod [the] Barouns amongẽs hem there,
"what this Enchawntour telleth vs here!"
thussone on hym they gonne to lye,
Eche of hem to othir, ful Sekerlye.

Then Merlin returns to Arthur, And whanne Merlyne Sawh they tookẽ on so,
Toward kyng Arthewr faste gan he Go,

and encourages him. and seyde: "sire, haue thou non drede,
For a3ens thyn Enemyes wel schalt þou spede,
and a3ens hem as mochel helpe schalt þou haue
as alle they conne cryen other crave."

In the evening they have a consultation. So whanne hit woxen was to Eve,
kyng Arthewr took Merlyn be the sleve.
Ek therchebisschope, and Antron also,
Sire kay & sire Vlphyn to-gederis gonne go,
and Sire Bretel with hem jn compenye,
thesc vij in cownseyl to-gederis gonne hye.
the kyng clepyd Merlyne to hym tho,
So that alle to-gederys gonne they go.

The King says to Merlin: "Dere frend Merlyne," thanne quod the kyng,
"Jesteneth now to My talkyng.
J haue herd told, ful certeinle,
that with my Fadyr thou were preve.
So wolde j 3ow preyen, with-owten faylle,

"Be my counsellor, That 3e wolde ben of Myn cownsaylle
and cownseyllen me of this thing among,
3if that this Meyne wylen me ony wrong.
wherfore j wolde 3ow hertelyche preye
My cownseyl to be & the sothe me seye

as you were my father's; lyk as to My Fadyr, kyng vterpendragon,
3e 3oven hym cownseyl in Many areson.
And wete 3e wel, Sire, jn ful certeyn,

and I will follow your advice. that j wyl neuere don 3ow ageyn,
ne thyng that schal 3ow mysplese owher,

8139. MS. quod Barouns. 8142. *hem*, *e* corrected from *y*.
8156. MS. *Sothat*

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as ferforth as lasteth Jn my power.
and sethen ȝe holpen me jn myn ȝong age,
Sosteyne me now aȝens this Baronage
and ek my lond here to Susteyne.
For thorwh goddis helpe and ȝow tweyne,
thorwh ȝowre help and my fadyr Antron,
j hope myn enemyes to ouercomen echon.
therefore, God, thorwh thyn grete myht
So Save my peple and me aryht!"

Help me against the barons.

I trust in God, in you, and in Antron."

"Syre," quod Merlyn, "drede ȝow non thing
of non of hem, with-owten lesyng.
For assone as ȝe deliuered be
of these baronage, that ȝe scholen se,
whiche that scholen comen ȝow to assaylle,
Thanne aftyrward werk be my cownsaylle,
and alwey aftyr as j schal ȝow lere,
doth be my cownseylle every-where.
the knyhtes that weren of the Round table,
That ȝowre fadyr held bothe ferm & stable,
Jn-to Here contre J-passed they be
For the grete vntrowthe and dysloyalte
that they Syen jn this Rem with-jnne,
Eche knyht to his owne contre gan he wynne.
But there is a Rewm here bysyde
of whiche Leodegan Js kyng this tyde;
the Rewm of Tarmelyde j-clepyd hit js,
of wheche Rewm the kyng an old man is, j-wys;
And his wyf ded Js ek therto,
and children hath he lyveng no mo
But a dowhter, that schal ben his eyr,
to whom al his lond schal repeyr
aftyr his deth, the sothe to Say.
but gret werre he hath ȝit be his day
aȝens the kyng Ryown of Jeawntez
and of wildernesse, that fewe men hawntez.
And the cause j schal tellen ȝow why:
For so many merveylles þere ben seyn, trewely,

Merlin replies: "Have no fear.

When you have repelled the first attack of the barons,

do as I shall tell you.

The knights of the Round Table have retired to [leaf 119 b] their own country.

That country is called Tarmelid.

The king, Leodegan, is an old man, his wife is dead, and he has only one daughter and heiress.

His bitter foe is Rion, king of a wild country.

8177. *r' help* added aftewards, *r'* on, *help* above the line.
8180. MS. *pe'ple.*

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bothe be day and ek be Nyht,
that men mown feren of that Syht."

This Rion

"This kyng Ryowns that j of telle,
a myhty man he js and Felle,
and mochel peple with hym hath he,
that myhty ben & ful of crewelte.

has conquered twenty kings,

and conqweryd he hath be his myht
twenty corowned kynges jn fyht,

whom he has treated disgracefully,

and alle here Berdes kut of hath he
Jn gret dispyt, as ȝe Scholen Se,
and closed they ben, with-owten lette,
and eche day to-forn hym at his mete
a knyht hem halt, as ȝe Scholen here,
as for gret dispyt, with-owten dwere.

and he swears he will not cease till he has conquered thirty.

And ȝit kyng Ryowns swereth, with-owten faylle,
neuere to leven werre nethir Bataylle,
Tyl that thrytty kynges conqweryd hath he.
and this kyng vppon leodegan werreth, Sykerle.

If your neighbour's land is destroyed, yours will come next;

Now leodegan marcheth vppon the,
and ȝyf that his rem dystroyed be,
thy rewm schalt thow lesen, with-owten faylle,
but ȝif thou werke be myn cow[n]saylle.

and he would have lost his already but for the knights of the Round Table.

and so hadde he his rewm, ful Sykyrle,
nere knyhtes of þe Rownde table hadde j-be.
wherfore, and thou wylt don aftyr me,

Go to him,

with hym a while schalt thou be,

and marry his daughter.

and his dowhter to wyve, with-owten nay,
and al his rem aftyr hys day.
also therto sche is bothe ȝong and fayr,
and of alle his goodis schal ben his ayr,
therto the wysest j-cownted that may be.

Do not trouble about the barons:

and of thin owne rewm nothing drede the,
For the Barowns that aȝens the werre,

they will have enough to defend themselves.

So moche scholen they han to done from ferre,
that lytel whille scholen they abyden there,
So mochil here bodyes scholen ben put in fere.

8230. MS. *cowſaylle.*

8244. The line was omitted and then written up the right margin, preceded by the crossed-out line: *that nathir' to haue m̄yde on mōn ne ſterre.*

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but Sore ocupyed Scholen they be
hemself to defende, ful Sykyrle.
and 3owre strengthes jn warde scholen 3e pytte — Put your strongholds in order,
Jn dyvers hondys to kepen hem qwyte,
3owre cytes and 3owre castelys bothe
with arblasteris and seriawnts, forsothe.
and Ek therchebisschope schal therto — and have your foes cursed by the archbishop
acursen hem that 3ow wrong wyl do,
and hym-Self schal don this Sentense,
To alle tho that to 3ow don ony offens,
and to alle the clergye thus schal hyt go
thorwh the Rem to ben declared So. — and the clergy.
and 3e scholen sen, in tyme comenge
what schal behappen of al this thinge.
thorwh the helpe that j schal 3ow do,
they scholen ben affrayed, Er they go.
and weteth wel, Sire, jn certeyn,
That to 3ow Evere J schal ben ful beyn. [leaf 119*o*]
and whanne ony Nede that 3e haue, — I will come whenever you want me;
j schal comen to 3ow, Er that 3e me crave.
And loke, anon whanne j to 3ow crye,
that 3e opene 3owre 3ates ful Redylye, — then open your gates at once;
and lete hem Entre there Everychon,
and thanne that amonges hem 3e ben anon.
thanne So Sore abassched Scholen they be,
so þat somme scholen Sone there fle,
that discomfyt scholen they ben alle; — and your enemies will be discomfited."
Swych aventure on hem þere schal falle."

Thanne departyd they there fulson,
and vppon to þe walles þe bisschope went anon. — The archbishop goes upon the walls.
and there kyng Arthewr aparayllede his Men,
an Merlyne a baner to hym Made then, — Merlin makes the king a banner
wherby he hadde gret Sygnyfyaunce,
and to his adversaryes ful gret dowtance.
vppon a lawnse that Baner was pyht — with a fire-vomiting dragon set on a lance.
with an oryble dragown in here Syht,

8260. *affrayed*, *d* squeezed in afterwards.
8270. The line was omitted and then written down the right margin.

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that Flawm & Fyr there owt he caste,
where-offen the barouns agrysen ful faste;
and therto he hadde a ful long taylle,
where-offen they merveylled, *with*-owten faylle.

The king appointe Kay his chief bannerer.

Thanne kyng Arthewr took this Baner,
and Syre Kay, his Styward, betook hit ther
jn this manere, as j 3ow Say:
that whyles he jn this world lyven may,
his chef Banorer forto be,
Whiles he may lyven jn prosperyte.
Thus arayed weren they with-jnne,

The barons pitch their tents outside.

and they *with*-owten to Fyhten wolden not blynne,
but there they pyhten here pavyloun*s*,
with Baners displayed and Gomfanoun*s*.

The archbishop calls to them.

and whanne therchebysschop*e* beheld al this,
anon to hem he clepede, j-wys,
and bad hem comen here myhtes to p*r*eve,
3yf the towr they myhte wy*n*nen er Eve.
they answeryd a3en, with-owten faylle:
"Non men but we hyt scholen assaylle."

He curses all king Arthur's antagonists.

Thanne therchebisschop*e* ryht there anon
hem cursede alle there everychon
that a3ens kyng Arthewr dyden ony thyng,
his rewm to damage other hyndryng.

The barons defy him.

Thussone the Baronage answeryd ageyn:
"of alle thy cursyng we setten not, pleyn,
but hym chasen Scholen we ful vtterly,
owt of this Lond to dryven hym jn hy.
and 3if we mown taken hym be ony weye,
he schal not asckapen that he Schal deye."

Merlin sets their tents on fire,

Anon whanne merlyne herde here bobaunce,
Fulsone he wrowht hem gret myschaunce:
on hem he caste his enchawntemens,
vppon Tentes and pavyloun*s*, *with*-owten defens,
and alle vppon a tyr there hem Sette,
That non of hem ne myhten hyt lette.

and brings about confusion.

So thens they fledden everychon,

8284. *they*, *t* inserted above the line.

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that non ne wyste of hem whedyr to gon.
Thanne kam Merlyne to the kyng anon,
and Seyde: "Syre, now is tyme ȝe gon;
openeth ȝowre ȝates and þat Ryht Faste,
and vppon ȝowre Enemyes that ȝe haste."
Anon the ȝates faste opened they were,
and Every Man owt prekede there,
So that to here Enemyes faste gonne they Ryde
with Baneris displayed fulsore that tyde,
where-offen the Barowns abassched were,
whanne they Syen hem aprochen so Nere;
For they Wenden, Ful Certeynle,
that swich a peple jn the Towr hadde not be.
kyng Arthewr on hem Rod with scheld & spere,
and Moche Noysawnce dyde hem there,
For astoned they weren of the fer,
that but lytel power ne hadden they ther;
hem to defende they ne hadde non Myht,
So that Moche peple they losten jn fyht.
There ȝonge kyng Arthewr kydde his prowesse,
and putte his Enemyes to gret distresse:
hors and Men ful faste he Slowh,
and alle the Barowns thens they flowh
Jnto anothyr prevy partye.
and there they Seyden tho, pleinlye,
a schame hyt were to hem Echon,
and he so lyhtly schold from hem gon.
thanne spak kyng Newtris of Garlot there:
"alle this werre ful Fenysched were,
ȝif that Arthewr here now were ded;
j to ȝow kan seyn non better Red."
"goth forth," thanne quod the Remnaunt tho,
"that this thing were thanne J-do.
and ȝif that ony Mestere that ȝe haue,
we scholden ȝow helpe that ȝe ben Save."
Thanne wente kyng Newtris forth, ful pleyn,
as a ȝong knyht and joly, jn certeyn,
and with hym a thryfty compenye

Merlin tells the king to sally.

The barons are dismayed

[leaf 119 d]

by the powerful onset,

lose much people,

and fly to a remote place.

There king Newtris says that Arthur must be killed.

He is encouraged by the others,

and returns to the attack,

8332. MS. *dydē*. 8351. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.

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of Bacheleris bolde and chevalrye.
and ryht a gret spere kyng Newtres bar,
and with kyng Arthewr he mette ryht thar.

King Arthur, with a mighty lance, rides to meet him.

whanne that kyng Artheur hym say comenge,
a3ens hym fulfaste he gan to flynge
with a gret lawnce, the hed of stel,
wherwith he besteryd him ryht wel.
For they that him Syen come prekynge,
they merveyllede that evere a man so 3ynge
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
and so sore to-gederis gonne they ryde,
that here hors Fowndrede jn that tyde.

Newtris breaks his spear,

kyng Newtris Arthewr so sore mette,
that his spere to-brak, so sore he smette;

and Arthur smites him off his horse.

and kyng Arthewr him smot ageyn,
thorwh Scheld & arm hit wente, ful pleyn,
ek thorwh the Scholdere there he hym bar,
and down of his hors threw hym ryht thar,
his hed to the grownde, his helys on hye,
that al the erthe denede, ful Sekyrlye.

King Loth hurries to his cousin's assistance.

but whanne kyng loth of orkanye this beheld,
that his cosyn germayn lay jn the feeld,
his hors with his Spores he took anon,
and toward kyng Arthewr rood ful Son
his half-brothyr to avengen there
(For two sostren hadden they wedded, as j 3ow lere).

Arthur meets him.

and whanne kyng loth he say comen so,
kyng Arthewr a3ens hym gan to go,
as ther of hym nothing he ne rowhte,
but fulfaste on hym kyng Arthewr sowhte,
Tyl that to-gederis ful sone they mette,
and ful grete strokes to-gederis they sette.

They break their spears,

and so sore they cowntred there,
that bothe here speris to-borsten were,

alight,

that here hors non ferthere myhte pase.

and take to their swords.

thanne sone here swerdis gonnen they vnbrase,

8380. MS. *forto; weddē.* 8390. MS. *thānne.*

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and so sore strokis to-gederis they smette,
that kyng loth was feld, with-owten lette.
Thanne Began thore A passyng Scry
on bothen partyes, ful Sekerly.
and a ful gret stowr began there thanne,
the kynges to Socowren, of Eche Manne;
bothe of knyht and Ek of kyng
there was wondyr gret distorbelyng.
and kyng Arthewris Meyne cam also
hym forto Socowren what they myhten do.
thanne be-gan there a ful gret stowr
on bothe partyes with grete langowr.
But certein, al this jlke stownde
bothe kynges lyen atte Grownde.

King Loth falls.
[leaf 120 *a*]
There is a general rush to assist the kings,
and a great tumult.

Whanne kyng Arthewr thus anoyed was,
his swerd he drowh owt jn that plas,
that jn the drawyng hit ȝaf a clerte,
that alle the peple there Myhte hyt se;
as thowh xx torches hadden ben lyht,
So that there hit semede to alle here Syht;
therto the same swerd, hos wyle hyt look,
That kyng Arthewr owt of the ston ferst he took.
and abowten the Swerd wreten was ful wel
Escalabort, þe wheche was graven in steel.
a Name of Ebrew hit was, j-wys,
that jn frensch Trawnchefyst j-clepyd Js,
that is Englesch Forto telle
as Trenchaunt, and scharpe, & cuttyng ful snelle.
and that, forsothe, ful trewe hyt Js,
as that here-aftyr ȝe scholen heren, j-wys.
whanne that kyng Arthewr Recouered was,
and his swerd drawen jn that plas,
jnto the grettest pres he gan to Go,
There as Most pres thanne say he tho,
and thussone there wyth a knyht he Mette,
and swich a boffet there thanne hym sette,
the arson of his hors he smot atwo,

Light flashes from Arthur's sword,
the same sword that he took out the stone,
and whose name 'Escalabort' is engraven in the steel.
Arthur, in the thickest press,
kills man and horse,

8410. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.

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and the knyht to dethe he wowndyd tho,
that bothe hors and man they fyllen to grownde;
and ful gret slawhtre he mad that stownde,
So that his strok dorste non man abyde,
So Ferd of hym they weren that tyde.

Whanne the Sevene kynges Syen this damage,
that Arthewr wrowht hem so moche owtrage,
thanne ful Sorewful jn herte they were,
and alle to cownseyl they drowen hem there.
"Let vs assemblen on hym everychon
and down to the erthe bringen hym anon."
So that with here sperys, that weren so stronge,
Towardys hym faste gonne they fonge,
also faste as they myhte ryde,
hym down to beren jn that Tyde.
and alle they grated on hym at onys,
him to han Slayn for the nonys;
but kyng Arthewr was armed so wel,
bothe jn erne and ek jn steel;
but down they boren hym to the grownde.
that say vlphyn, Antron, & kay, & Breteaus þat stownde,
and so dyde more alle here lynage,
To Arthewr thei wente with gret corage.
and whanne the vij kynges they Syen this,
ayens this meyne they wenten j-wys.
and þere Syre kay with kyng augwys mette,
and thorwh the lefte Scholdere ful sore him smette,
more over doun to the erthe him Bar,
thanne as for ded he lefte hym thar.
and antron Karados so smot thanne,
that he to-brosed hym bothe body & panne,
and jn ded swowne lefte hym þat tyde,
So that he ne myhte nethyr gon ne ryde.
And Vlphyn Kyng Newtres mette Anon,
that hors and man to-gederys gonne gon.
and Syre Breteaus & kyng Ydieres
theyre swerdis they broken, they weren so fers,

and causes terror all round.

The seven kings, greatly distressed,

agree on a joint attack.

They assail him all at once;

his armour proves firm;

but he falls to the ground.

Arthur's men rush to his relief.

Kay strikes king Augwis,

Antron, king Carados;

[leaf 120 b]

Ulfin encounters king Newtris,

Breteaus, king Ydiers.

8428 8432 8436 8440 8444 8447 8452 8456 8460 8464

8450. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.
8459. *lefte* twice, the latter crossed out.

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Eche on othyr in that place,
So strong betwixen hem the skyrmesch wase.
and al this whyle the Barownes in fere
at the Erthe with Artheur, as he lay there,
and so on the helm there hym they bete,
hym there to Maken his lyf to lete,
that so sore astoned kyng Arthewr was,
he wende haue deyd jn that plas.
and whanne Syre Kay al this beheld,
his Swerd he drowgh owt jn that feld,
and thedyr as that kyng Arthewr lay,
as faste he hyeth as he kan oper May.
and with kyng Loth there he Mette,
and swich a strok he on hym Sette,
that bothe hors and Man there wente to grownde,
So sore he hym smot that ylke stownde.
thanne be-gan there a fulstrong Melle
bothen partyes to Socowren, ful sykirle,
and gret Manslawhtre, with-owten pyte,
of Men & hors there myhten they se.
but so faste thei besyed hem, þat Meyne there,
Tyl that kyng Arthewr azen j-horsed were.
but gret peyne the[y] hadden therto
and gret los of peple also.
whanne that þe comunes Syen Arthewr so fyhte,
Fulfaste they cryden anon þere Ryhte,
So that the cry there Ros al abowte,
and to Arthewr they comen, with-owten dowte,
and seyden to Arthewr there as blyve:
"we scholen the helpen, whyles we han lyve;
For lyven and deyen we scholen with the here
and thin Ryht to Sosteyne al jn fere."
thanne this comune peple anon
vppon the vj kynges gonne to gon,
and þere was bataille wondyr strong,
but non Rawnsom wolden they fong,

All the time King Arthur is sorely vexed.

But now Sir Kay

strikes also king Loth,

and after great slaughter

King Arthur is remounted.

The common people, seeing the king's prowess, shout applause,

vow fidelity,

and join in the battle.

8467. *in fere* added afterwards.
8485. *thei, i* squeezed in afterwards.
8487. MS. *the.*
8493. MS. *afblyve.*

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but lyf for lyf and hed for hed,
thus pleyden bothe partyes jn that sted.

King Arthur
Thanne kyng Arthewr so ful of Yre
owt sprang on horsbak as spark of fyre
To-forn alle his othyr Meyne,
encounters king Ydiers,
and with kyng Ydyers sone Mette he.
and vp his swerd he lefte on hy
him to han smeten ful grevously.
but of his purpos he fayllede tho,
who loses his horse,
and kyng Ydiers hors nekke he smot atwo,
that down they fyllen bothe to grownde,
bothe hors and Man in that stownde.
but is relieved by his men.
thanne Retorned kyng Ydiers Meyne
hym forto Socowre, as hit Myhte be.
After great fighting,
thanne strengere fyht was jn that plas,
thanne of alle daye to-forn there was,
and More harm & More occisiown
there was don that tyme jn vyrown.
in which Arthur has his sword bathed in blood,
for kyng Arthewr dyde moche harm jn that pres
bothe of hors and Men, and wolde not Ses,
with Trenchefust, his Swerd so good,
that bathed was al in Mennes blood;
al his harneys and his armure
with Mennes brayn was soyled, j the Ensure.
king Ydiers and the others fly,
So that Ydiers and his Meyne
as discomfyt fledden, Sykirle.
[leaf 120 c] pursued by Arthur,
So that ful Longe Lasted this chas
after these vj kynges jn that plas.
and of al the good that they thedyr browhte,
the valew of twey pens awey boren they nowhte,
and having lost all their property.
that alto-gederis j-lost was there,
what thorwh bataylle and thorwh Fyre,
which that Merlyne vppon hem wrowhte;
Sauf Gold oper Sylver Saved was pere nowhte.

Chap. VIII.
Whanne kyng Arthewr hem hadde conqweryd,
these Syxe kynges, as ȝe haven herd,

8524. MS. *jthe.*

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Be the cownseyl of Merlyne,
To cardeweyl jn wales he turned ageyn,
and Sente faste abowtes jn that contre
aftyr Sowdyowrs ful gret plente.
Bothe Robes and fees he ȝaf hem there,
To alle the Sowdeowrs that *with* him were,
bothe to powre, sqwyers, and to knyht,
So that they Sworen be God almyht,
with hym they wolden both lyven and deye;
thus they hym Enswred be here feye.
whanne Kyng Arthewr hadde thus j-sped,
& the hertes of þe peple geten jn that sted,
and gret love abowtes jn that contre
of alle the peple jn here degre,
and aftyr he stuffede his cytes echon,
his castelis, his Garesouns be on & be on.
and sethen to logres he wente, j vndirstond,
that now is Clepyd Londone jn Engelond.
and there his parlement began he thanne;
To hym there Semblyd Many a Manne.
This cowrt there began, *with*-owten delay,
In Septembre vppon owre ladyes day.
atte that cowrt, with-owten dowte,
Many knyhtes he Made, both stronge & stowte.
and to hem he ȝaf bothen grete Rentes & fe,
and to hym dyden they homage & fewte.
To Every Man he ȝaf swich gwerdon there,
So that here degre wel Sosteyned were.
and thus he Gat hym love plente
of knyht, Sqwyer, and *comune*alte,
So that they hym Enswrede here trowthe & feye,
with hym to lyven and Ek to deye.
and sethen they dyden him Socour, Sekyrlye,
as aftyr ȝe scholen heren jn this storye.

Aftyr that kyng Arthewr thus hadde j-do,
and j-Mad thre hundred knyhtes & Mo,
and al his strengthes j-stuffed ful wel,

Arthur goes to Wales,
collects soldiers,
distributes liberal gifts,
wins the love of the people,
and equips cities and castles.
He then holds his parliament in London,
and makes many new knights,
who likewise vow fidelity.
All this being done,

8565. *plente*, *le* blurred. 8567. *trowthe*, *o* daubed.

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bothen cytees, townes, and castel
(aftyr Merlynes cownseil þis wrowhte he,
and Ek Moche More, ful certeinle),
and whanne he hadde al this j-do,

Merlin withdraws to have a consultation with Arthur and Ulfin.

kyng Artheur on syde *Mer*lyne took tho,
and so to cownseylle to-gederis they wente,
and Vlphin with hem they token presente.
"Syre kyng, a thing j moste 3ow telle
(that 3e and Vlphyn herkene*n* My spelle!):

He tells of Holy Blasy,

There js a good Man jn on forest,
that jn wildyrnesse lyveth as a best,
whiche that Js jn northhumberlond,
and an holy Man he is, 3e vndirstond;
and to Me he is bothe leef and dere,

who saved Merlin's mother (Ch. I),

For my Modyr he savede and me jn fere."
thanne began he to tellen, verament,
how that his Modyr scholde han be brent

[leaf 120 *d*]

For A Blame and For A cryme
that on hire was put be old tyme,

of king Fortager

and how Fortager hym dyde seken also,
Ek how his Modyr veylled a no*nne* was tho,

and his tower (Ch. II),

and how the towr lasteth Jnto this day,
and stonden hit schal for Evere and ay,
Ek of the dragowns the Signifyance,
al this hem tolde, *with*-owte*n* varyau*n*ce.

of Merlin's acquaintance with Uterpendragon (Ch. III),

Thanne tolde he, aftyr the deth of Fortager
how *with* Vterpendrago*n* he qweynted ther;
and of the grete bataylle he tolde also
That vppon Pendrago*n* was j-do;

of the engendering of Arthur (Ch. IV),

and how be the dewchesse he Made hym lye
jn the castel of Tyndagel, Sekyrlye—
"Jn wheche place Engendrid 3e were";

and the marriage of his parents (Ch. V).

and how Vlphin p*ur*posyd the Maryage there—
"be-twe*n*e 3owre Fadyr and 3oure Modyr, the queene";
alle these he tolde hem be-dene;

Further he tells of Arthur's sisters and half-sisters,

and how fyve dowhtre*n* hadde sche bore
(what Maryed & ded they were*n* to-fore),

8595. *lafteth* inserted above the line, erroneously after (instead of before) *Jnto*.

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and tweyne be the dewk hadde sche;
of wheche on weddyd king loth, Sykerle; 8612 of whom one is married to king Loth,
kyng newtres anothyr hadde to wyve, one to king Newtris,
lyk as aftyr ȝe scholen heren as blyve;
and the thrydde wedded kyng Vryens; and one to king Uriens;
and þe fowrthe weddid kyng Bryadens— 8616 the fourth is a widow,
"the wheche that ded now Js he,
Fadyr he was to kyng Gwyseans, Serteinle,
that js now kyng of Scotlond,
as j do ȝow to vndyrstond; 8620
and the fyfthe, at londone hyt is, and the fifth is at school in London.
and there to Scole it is set, jwys,
and moche clergye forsoth hit can,
as of þe age doth ony man." 8624
"and wete thou wel, kyng Loth hath here "King Loth has five sons;
Fyve Sones be his wyf so dere,
of whiche on js thyn ful blod, Sykerle,
that thou engendredyst jn londone cyte; 8628
and Semly ȝonge men they ben echon,
of wheche that Gaweyn hyhte þe ton. one of them, Gawein, shall be the truest knight
and he schal be the trewest knyht,
and his Lord loven *with* strengthe & myht, 8632
Therto þe worthyest that owher may be,
and therto gentelest, Sire, certeinle.
and ȝow schal he loven over al thing,
and don ȝow worschepe as to his kyng. 8636 and a great help to thee.
For wete wel *þat* he schal be þe same man,
be whom thy lond geten thou kan.
and thy meyne to hym mek Scholen be
and him don worschepe jn alle degre. 8640
king newtris, anoþer brothyr hath he, King Newtris has a brother,
that galatyns hyhte, ful Sykerle.
kyng vriens anothir hath also, and king Uriens
that yweyn is clepyd, *with*-owten mo, 8644 likewise a brother, Iwein.
that the schal Susteyne *with* body & herte,
þer nis non prowesse schal hym asterte.

8611. A second *and* crossed out before *be*.
8614. The line was omitted and then written down the right margin.
8627. *blod* added above the line.

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They shall both be dubbed by thee, and bring lots of people with them.

and wete þou wel, þat dubbed scholen they not be,
Tyl þou hem armes ȝyve, ful Sykyrle.
and they scholen bringen the gret compeny,
For love of here kyn, certeinlye,
Of Barowns sones & oþer mo;
moche peple with hem cometh the vnto
[leaf 121 *a*] The Forto Don Alle maner of Servyse,
whyles that they lyven as jn here wyse."

Further, in Little Britain there live two kings,

"also, Sire, jn lytel Bretayngne,
dwellen tweyn kynges, jn certeyne,
the wheche they holden both of the,
and cosynes germayn bothe they be.
and tweyne sostres j-weddyd they han þerto,
that cosynes germayns there ben also.

with children that shall be brave men;

These tweyne kynges, chyldren they han,
that stalworthe scholen ben and myhty men.
and so worthy knyhtes they scholen be,
theyre pere schal ben jn non contre.

these kings are called Ban and Boors.

The eldest of the tweyne kynges of fame,
kyng Ban of Baynoc js his Name.
the tóther kyng, of gawnes Sire Boors hyhte,
a worthy werrour and mochel of myhte.

They are vexed by a neighbour (king Claudas, p. 234).

but a felonus Neyghebour hath that kyng,
that hym doth gret Travaylle & hyndryng,
and alle he hit doth for envye,
For he ne may hem not justefye.
and for they ben so trewe and so stedfast,

Send word for them

aftyr hem j wolde thou wost senden jn hast,
and sende hem to seyne, ouer alle thyng
that thow wost ben of here aqweyntyng,
and with the to ben at al halwen feste.
thanne to the moste comen bothe lest and meste,

to come to thy parliament;

To thy parlement, and the obeye.
Somme comen for good, as j the seye,
and somme for evel jn othyr degre,

they will come with gentle hearts.

but these tweyne kynges, as j telle the,
they comen with hertys deboneyrre,
here to thy cowrt Forto Repeyrre.

8650. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.

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For they ben ful good men and trewe,
bettyr of condissiouns fyndest þou but fewe.
and þerfore aȝens hem j wyle thou go, — Receive them with honour,
and thy Servyse to hem offren also.
and mochel thank they scholen konnen the,
and to þe don homage and fewte.
thanne whanne al this js j-do,
and thy cowrt they welen gon fro,
anon thow hem clepe to thy cownsaylle; — make them your counsellors,
and sey to hem, with-owten Faylle,
that jnto Tarmelyde thou wylt go,
There to ben avenged of thy fo,
Preyeng hem to gon with the — and ask them to go with thee to Tarmelid.
(For ryht goode men Syker they be),
there to abyden with kyng Leodogan,
and so preye þou as wel as þou kan;
For goode knyhtes ben they bothe,
and here lond of the hath mester, forsothe. — They will want thy help.
For thin enemyes aȝens the the lond wilen defende,
but they scholen not Therto longe attende,
Nethyr Sosteynen non whyle aȝens the,
thorwgh helpe of these tweyne kynges, sykerle, — and thou shalt have theirs.
that jn thy compenye scholen abyde."
"ȝyt to ȝow more J seye this tyde:
a costom J have, j Sey ȝow pleynlye,
that to the forest j moste me hye — I must go to the forest partly on account of my nature,
be enchesoun of my nature,
thyder j moste, j ȝow enswre,
bencheson of hym that me dyde gete;
this thing at this tyme wyl j not lete.
and for anothyr cawse also — partly to speak with Blasy.
to the wylde forest wyl j go:
with holy Blase to speken there,
For An Holyere man Knowe J Nowhere. — [leaf 121 b]
and thou schalt neuere have nede of me, — Whenever you want me, I shall come.
but Sone that J schal ben with the,

8702. *hath*, the second *h* squeezed in afterwards.
8703. MS. *the* þe *the*, with þe crossed out.
8706. *helpe* added in the left margin.
8711. MS. *enchenoũ*.

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the to cownseyllen what that j may.
But I shall often appear in another shape — but of on thing j schal ȝow say:
often-tymes schalt thow me se
jn other semblaunce, ful sykerle,
thanne þou sixt me to-forn þe now here,
often-tymes toforn þe schal j apere;
In order to be known only by a few. — For j kepte not alle men knewe
whanne j *with* the spak, but ȝif it were fewe.
More over j wylle that thou swere to me,
Never disclose what I say to thee." — that be the Neuere discured j be
of non thing that j haue told the,
but that thou kepe hit Evere preve.
and ȝif thou do, j schal the Seye:
hyt schal the Torne to angyr and treye."
The king promises secrecy — and the kyng hym swoor there anon Ryht,
he scholde Nevere discure hym to non wyht,
and implicit compliance. — Ne Neuere schold don thing aȝens his wylle;
thus the kyng Seyde hym vntylle.
and Merlyne Enswred hym ageyn
that he wolde deserven hyt, certeyn.

In the city, where the consultation took place, the people rejoice, — Thus the covenaunt was fenysscheđ there,
be-twene the kyng and Merlyn jn fere.
Gret joye Maden they jn that cyte
of here kyng so ȝong jn his degre,
that so worthy a man of armes he was,
and therto so hardy jn Eche a plas.
so that for joye of that solempnite
and erect a quintain for the knights. — the worthy Burgeys of that cyte
a qwyntyn they Reryd there besyde
jn a fayr Medewe that jlke tyde,
the ȝonge knyhtes to bowrdeyen there
with scheldes hangeng abowten here swere.
this Revel lasted Fully viij dayes
with grete feste, as this storye sayes.
After the festival, Arthur returns to London, — and whanne the feste was al j-do,
To londone ward the kyng gan go,
there to abyden his parlement,

8732. MS. *Evene* with an *er*-mark above.

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at halwe*n*masse to be*n* holden p*re*sent. — and issues a summons to another parliament.
tha*n*ne were*n* they sent fore Everychon
that homage and fewte scholde*n* don.
So þ*at* som partye come*n* at his sonde,
and som partye hit dyde with-stonde. — Some refuse to come; they are warned by the king.
tha*n*ne sente the kyng to hem ageyn
that they scholden hit amende*n*, certeyn,
o*þer* ellis he wolde hym-self ful blyve,
ȝif god þ*er*to hym Sente his lyve.

Thus sente kyng [Arthewr] Forth Ryht anon, — Arthur sends Ulfin and
and bad Sire vlphyn & sire bretel gon — Bretel to call
To kyng Ban of Baynok ful blyve — king Ban
and sethen to kyng Boors, his brother be wyve: — and king Boors
and Evere they wylen his love crave
owther his Frenschepe Forto have,
That to hym they comen jnto grete breteygne, — to the same parliament.
at al halewen Masse feste, w*ith*-owte*n* leyne.
Tha*n*ne wente*n* forth these tweyne knyhtes
these two kynges to seken owt-Ryhtes.
these kynges Emporysscheđ were*n* jn vyrown
Jn tyme of Vter Pendragown.
thus passeden the knyhtes ou*er* the se, — The two knights cross over to Little Britain.
Tyl jnto lytel breteygne they come*n*, certeinle;
and thorwh a place of desert they wente,
That distroyed and brend was, veramente.
Thanne comen they to Anothir cyte, — On their way [leaf 121 c]
that boorges in berry is clepyd, Sekyrle, — to Bourges in Berry, a city claimed by king Claudas, they find the country laid waste.
whiche that kyng clawdas of desert
hyt kalanged openly and apert.
this kyng clawdas of which j ȝow telle, — This is what had happened:
anothyr castel kalanged ful snelle,
whiche that kyng ban hadde there sette — king Ban had built a castle;
with-jnne*n* his lond, with-owte*n* lette.
kyng clawdas can Evere hym withseye, — his neighbour, king Clandas, disputed his right
and seyde the Lond was his, jn feye,
where-vppon the castel stood;
he wolde hyt haven for Evel o*þer* good.

8767. MS. */ente kyng ffforth;* either the name (cf. footnotes to ll. 11043, 14226) or the definite article is missing.

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and kyng Ban than answeryd ageyn,
and seyde hit was neuere his, jn certeyn. 8796
a war began; So that thorwh this, grete werre began;
but kyng Ban wolde leven hit for non man,
that the castel he dede vpe make,
owther for drede owther for wrake. 8800
thus began gret hate, werre, & envye,
betwixen tho two kynges, Sekyrlye.
This werre al here lyve dyde laste.
Claudas invaded the country, So that this clawdas jnto Ban his rem paste, 8804
and hym defyede jn many a d[e]gre,
and jn that Lond dyde grete adversyte
Jn Townes that vnwalled were;
burnt and pillaged, Sone on fyre he sette hem there, 8808
of wheche he took many grete pelages;
the peple he Slowh and dyde Owtrages,
For he was with-owten pyte.
but could not take the castle but as towching to the castel, Sykyrle, 8812
that kyng ban hadde areryd there,
he ne hadde non myht to don hyt non dere.
This castel kyng ban hadde Stuffed wel
With Seriauntes and arblasteris everydel. 8816
from its defender, an old captain; and þere-jnne hadde he put an old capteyn,
hos name was gracyen, with-owten leyn.
and on of Bannes sones with gracyen was,
that Baynyn was clepyd jn that plas. 8820
this Baynyns was sethen of gret worthynesse,
a worthy knyht, and of gret prowesse;
more thanne at this tyme þe Storye doth [not] spelle.
king Ban but now of kyng ban j schal ȝow telle, 8824
that ful wroth & ful angry was
For the harm he hadde jn many a plas.
and whanne he knew the certeynte,
collected an army, To-gyderis he gaderyd his meyne 8828
aȝens kyng clawdas forto fyhte,
for alle passages he knew ful ryhte.

8805. MS. *dgre*, *g* being tampered with, as if a correction had been intended.
8823. MS. *doth fpelle*; *p* squeezed in.
8829. *clawdas*, *la* blurred.

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Whanne these tweyne ostes scholden mete,
To-gederis to Fyhten they wolden not lete.
So that there was ful gret mortalyte
on bothe partyes thanne, certeynle.
and so moche peple Slowh this kyng ban,
and dissemed the membres of many a man,
that a man myhte han seyn jn the feld
hepes as of Swyn oþer of schepe lyn ded.
So that Fawht kyng Ban & his meyne,
That kyng clawdas fledde & his compeyne,
and loste al his harneys and his Pelage,
that he to-fortymes took be owtrage,
and the presoners Rescued weren Everychon.
on anothir partye Entryd kyng boors anon,
that half-Brothyr was to kyng Ban,
jnto kyng clawdas Lond Entrede he than,
and þere brende and dyde distrocciown
Abowten Al His Lond Jn Vyrown
Jnto the cyte of desert;
thedyr he brend ful sone and apert,
and that lond distroyede al abowte,
that nowher for hym non man myhte Rowte.
So gret distrocciown there he dede,
that jn twenty myle of lengthe & brede
No man jn that Lond loggen myhte,
To liggen drye be day ne be nyhte,
but ȝif vndir Roche oþer vndir Erthe hit were,
cowde no man drye loggen hym there.
So was kyng clawdas Emporysched there tho,
that he ne wyste what he myhte do.
So on the kynges dorste he non more werre Make,
lest hit scholde hym torne to Sorwen and wrake.
thus fownden they this lond distroyed & brent,
they that on kyng Arthewris Message went,
and Merveylled Mochel of this thing
as jn the contre they paste Rydyng.
So Ryden they forth, with-owten les,
Tyl they comen to þe castel of Trebes,

8832 gave battle,
8836 killed lots of people,
8840 and put king Claudas to flight;
8844 king Boors invaded the enemy's own land,
8848 destroyed it so thoroughly [leaf 121 *d*]
8852
8856 that there was not a house left within twenty miles,
8860 and crushed king Claudas entirely.
8864 Thus king Arthur's messengers find the land desolate.
8868 They ride on to Trebes.

8832. MS. *ffyhtēg*. 8843. *and*, *d* through correction.

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That kyng Ban there dyde arere,
From his Enemyes to defenden him Every-where.

They there find Ban's fair young queen, Eleine,

Jn this castel Qwene Eleyne was,
kyng bannes wyf jn that plas,
and therto the Fairest Lady was sche
that owher was jn ony contre,
and but of ȝong age, the sothe to say,
but xvj ȝer ȝit be that day,

whose sister is married to king Boors,

and but lytel whyle wedded was sche
kyng Boors hire soster wedded, sykerle,
a worthy lady jn alle wyse,
as ony Man on Erthe cowde devyse.
whanne Vlphyn and Bretel comen to trebes,

ask for the king, learn that he is with his brother,

aftyr kyng Ban they axeden, with-owten les.
they seyden, he was gon to parlement
to his brothyr, kyng Boors, verament.
and whanne they wysten he was not there,

and depart again.

of qwene Eleyne they token here leve in fere.
So armed Ryden they forth anon,

They now have to pass through a country infested by robbers,

For the contre that they scholde by gon
was perylows forto passen by,
as j ȝow Seye, sires, certeynly,
For Mysdoeris jn that contre.
and Many Mo Scholden there be,

whom the two kings certainly try to put down.

Nere drede of þe two kynges so ryhte
that on hem don Reddure anon with Myhte.
For ȝif ony Man that they cowden aspye,
And he were taken with felonye,
anon to jewyse he Scholde be do
and ben distroyed for Evere Mo.

Whanne these knyhtes from Trebees weren gon,
Vlphyn and Bretel to-gederys alon,

Before long, they meet seven of king Claudas' knights.

and Er fyve Myles they hadden past,
vij knyhtes there they Syen jn hast,
that weren of kyng clawdas Meyne,
that theke pas they kepten, Sykerle,

8869. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.
8888. *by*, *y* corrected from *e*.

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and weren Repeyred owt of desert tho,
there what to geten that they myhten also.
and whanne the Sevene knyhtes þat þer were
Syen Vlphyn and bretel come Rydyng there,
"behold," quod the vij knyhtes thanne,
"Se on what hors þat comen these menne;
and but we letten hem the weye,
we ben but cowardes, be my feye;
For they ben not of this contre,
Nethyr Here Armes We Knowen not, sekyrle."
"Sertes," quod on to anothyr thanne,
"they semen bothe welfareng Menne,
bothe on horsbak and Ek On foote,
they seme good Men, wel j woote.
and 3if oþer Mennes Servantes that they be,
Thanne a good Man Serven they, Sykyrle.
therefore hem to dispoylle let vs now hye,
For þer-of hauen we nede gret, ful Sykirlye.
here hors and here harneys bothe
vs nedyth to han, ben they neuere so lothe."

These agree not to grant free passage

to the strangers, [leaf 122 a]

whose fine horses and harness

should be seized.

Thussone on of hem prekyd owt
From alle his Felawes (he was so prowd),
and a3ens these Messengeris gan he Ryde,
jn a gret haste that ylke tyde,
and seyde: "lordynges, of whens ben 3e,
whom Seken 3e jn this contre?
and whethyr that 3e Serven kyng Ban
owther kyng Bors, his brothyr, telle vs now than.
and 3yf with kyng clawdas that 3e be,
thanne scholen 3e passen whyder so wylen 3e.
For Ellis, certeyn, scholen 3e ben ded,
and non furthere to passen jn this sted.
For we ben set here, Certeynlye,
this weye to kepen ful streytlye,
that noman schal passen be this contre,
but 3if þat we wyten what so they be.
and 3if to kyng clawdas wylen 3e pase,

One of the knights accosts them:

"Where do you come from, and whom do you want?

If you belong to king Claudas, you may pass, otherwise not.

For we are set to keep this road.

8929. MS. *seyden*.

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thanne forth to passen scholen ȝe han grace,
You will have to give up your harness and your horses." and Ellis ȝowre harneys Moste ȝe leven here,
and bothe ȝoure hors to-Gyderis jn Fere. 8944
thanne with-owten deth passen scholen ȝe,
oþer payeng of Rawnsom, Sykyr ȝe be.
therto presonement scholen ȝe non have,
but hey[l] & al hol to passen here Save, 8948
Sauf ȝoure hors and harneys scholen ȝe forgone."
thus seide this knyht þat to hem cam alone.
Ulfin angrily replies: Anon as Vlphin this vndirstood,
For anger he lokede as Red as blood. 8952
"Stop a bit, "Sire knyht," he seyde, "hye the not to faste,
For al thy Malyce is nygh j-paste.
Mafey, thou spekest ful velenosly!
what trowest thou þat j sette þer-by? 8956
you won't get them!" For nethyr hors ne harneys g[e]tyst þou not here,
For Er thou have, thou beyest hem ful dere.
J trowe thow wene hem sone forto gete,
and þat schalt thou not, for j schal the lette." 8960

Bretel seconds his fellow, Whanne that Bretealx vndyrstood this,
that the knyht to Vlphyn so spak amys,
he seyde: "sire knyht, þou thinkest ful ylle,
but of thy bost j schal the sone felle." 8964
and rushes against the knight. with his spores bretel his hors smot blyve
aȝens that knyht to Ryden wel swythe.
and þat beheld thanne this knyht anon,
and Faste aȝens Bretel he gan to gon, 8968
and abowtes his nekke he heng his Scheld,
there-with to defenden him jn that feld.
They meet. and there fulsore to-gederys they Mette,
So that on Bretel a gret strok he sette, 8972
and Bretel ful sore smot hym ageyn
Bretel pierces the knight, that thorwgh the left scholdere he bar hym, pleyn,
Tyl that þe tronchon schewede on þe tothyr syde,
hal[f] schaft and More jn that ilke tyde. 8976

8948. MS. *hey.* 8956. MS. *whhat.* 8957. MS. *gtyſt.*
8960. þ squeezed in afterwards.
8961. Ornament like a face in the left margin (inside the long flourish of *w*); similarly ll. 8987, 9265, etc.
8967. þ squeezed in afterwards. 8976. MS. *hal.*

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& þere to þe grownde he bar hym ful ʀyht, — who falls to the ground;
both hors & man þere jn that fyht.
There Swowned this Knyht for Angwysch & peyne, — [leaf 122 b]
as this Storye here telleth, Syres, jn certeyne. 8980
than aʒen sire Bretel his spere owt drowgh thore, — he draws out his spear again,
al hol and as sownd as hit was to-fore,
and seide to þe knyht thanne jn þat tyde: — and says:
"here mown now ʒe wel ʀesten and abyde 8984 — "Now you may stay here and keep the road!"
this weye to kepen for ᴍan othir knave,
and geten swich avauntage as ʒe ᴍown haue."

Whanne that Vlphyn beheld al this, — Ulfin greatly approves.
Ful wel hyt lyked hym, þe justis, j-wys, 8988
and preysede Bretel for his jorne,
For wel had he qwyt hym, ful Sykerle.
thanne forth they ʀeden but a lytel weye,
that the vj knyhtes behelden, jn feye, 8992 — The six knights
hough that h[er]e lord sore wowndyd was
and jn the Feeld lay jn that plas,
and seide that glad scholden they neuere be, — vow vengeance.
Tyl here lord venged were, ful certeinle. 8996
thanne of these vj, tweyne gonnen Owt ʀyde — Two of them ride to attack the messengers
to ouertaken þe ᴍessengeris jn that Tyde,
al so faste as here hors ᴍyhte hem bere,
So that they ouertook hem anon there. 9000
and whanne that they weren hem faste bye,
anon these ᴍessengeris they gonne ascrye, — with a menacing cry.
and therto hem ᴍanacede wondyr sore,
but fullytel there-offen they ʒoven thore. 9004
and whanne they hem Syen aprochen so ɴy,
ageyns hem they torneden ful worthyly — The messengers turn on them,
with here scheldis and speris anon ʀiht there,
that with-jnne schort while jsembled they were. 9008
so that alle iiij there so sore they ᴍette, — and there is a fierce encounter.
and so grete strokis to-gederys they sette,
that on peces to-schateryd here scheldis,
and the gobettes flowen jnto the feldys, 9012
that persched was bothen hauberk & habiriown

8993. MS. *he.* 8999. MS. *af fo faſte.*

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of Bothe partyes there jn Vyrown.

Bretel fells one,

thanne aftyr, Bretel with his Lawnce
Smot his aduersarye atte owtrawnce:
thorwgh hawberk, haberiown, & þorwh þe throte
he hym there sone bar, God hyt wote,
that ded of his hors þere fyl he down,
jnto the Feld ouer his arsown.

Ulfin, the other.

and Vlphyn his aduersarye smot so tho,
that his spere thorwgh his lyft scholdere gan go,
and down of his hors fyl he jnto the feeld,
where as he lay stylle vndyr his scheld.

Two more knights ride to attack,

Thanne of th[e] iiij knyhtes jsswed owt tweyne,
here felawes to avengen þere, jn certeyne,
and maden there a ful gret scry,
and seiden that they wolden deyen, trewly,
but that here Felawes avenged were,
er that they pasten ony forthere there.

are met by the messengers,

thanne anon the Messengeris tweyne
ayens hem here hors hedis tornede ageyne.
anon Sire Vlphyn dressid hym ful faste
ayens his adversarye, er he forthere paste;
and Bretel ayens the tothyr gan Ryde,
So that al fowre Metten jn that tyde.

and despatched in a similar way.

Sire Bretel his felawe th[er]e so smot,
that thorugh the Body the spere hit glot.
and Vlphin his felawe there so Mette,
and swich a strok on him he sette,
that hors & man to grownde he bar,
So that his Nekke asondir barst Rylit thar.

Bretel renews his scoffing speech, [leaf 122 *c*]

thanne spak Bretel to his felawe:
"Syre, of this Jorne ȝe Mown Ben Fawe!
and here to Manacen whom that ȝe wylle,
and this passe to kepen, and here lyn stylle,
Therto good leve, Syre, scholen ȝe have,
thys weye to kepen from knyht oþer knaue."

9020. *ffeld*, *ld* on erasure. 9022. *lyft*, *t* squeezed in afterwards.
9023. *hors* added above the line. 9025. MS. *th iiij*.
9027. *fcry*, *c* corrected from *r*.
9037. MS. *the*; cf. l. 11379, footnote.
9048. *thys*, *y* corrected from *e*.

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And at this lowgh Vlphyn welfaste;
thanne forth jn here weye to-gederis they paste.

Ulfin laughs, and both set off together.

Anon jn here jorne Ryden they forth there,
as wery men that forfowhten were.
So jn here weye they Reden forth Ryht,
that to the cyte of Baynoyc they comen þat nyht,
wher that they fownden ful gret plente
of diuers peple there, ful Sykerle.
For bothe kynges there weren jn Fere,
and ful gret counceyl hadden they there.
these two knyhtes Ryden forth here weye,
Tyl that to þe paleys they comen, jn feye.
and of here hors they lyhted adown,
and preyden a good man of the town
here hors to kepen and here harneys bothe,
and jnto the cowrt they wente, forsothe.
There sone axeden they aftyr kyng Ban
and aftyr kyng Bors, his brother, than.
they seiden, jn chambre that they were
Jn gret cownseylle to-gederis jn fere.
thanne þe Messengeris they weren ful gladde,
that bothe kynges to-gederis they hadde.
So that the Messengeris stylle abyden tho,
Tyl that the kynges here counseyl hadden j-do.

In the evening they arrive at Bainoik.

ride to the palace,

ask for kings,

and learn that they are both in counsel.

The messengers wait.

Arid whyles they stooden Jn this degre,
there cam a knyht there forth, Sykerle,
that Leownces of Paerne was his name,
& with hym kam a knyht of gret Fame,
that fulwel he lovede jn alle degre,
and Sire Pharens hyhte he, Sykerle.
These tweyne knyhtes comen jn fere,
To axen the Messengeris what they wolden there.
they seyden that weten wel they Scholde,
ȝyf that they so longe abyden þere wolde,
tyl that here Message were don there
To bothe bretheren that kynges were.

In the meantime, two knights, Leonces

and Farien,

ask them what they want.

9073. MS. *Jnthis.* 9078. *Sykerle, k* in darker ink.
9083. *there* crossed out before *were*.

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The knights and the messengers recognize each other as dear old friends.

and whanne they herden hem bothe thus seyn,
thanne Eche of hem othyr knew, ful pleyn.
anon Eche othyr there Gan forto Embrace,
and Mochel joye they Maden jn that place.
thanne axeden they 3if they speken scholde
with the tweyne kynges, and what they wolde.
and they seyden: "3e, sires, ful sekyrly,
For therto haven we nede, trewely."

Hand in hand, they go to the kings.

anon thanne jn hondis they tooken jn fere,
and so to-gederis jnto chambre wenten there.
thanne anon as the kynge[s] these two knyhtes sye,
a3ens hem they wenten ful hastelye,
For wel wisten they thanne, *with*-owten Fayllynge,
that they scholden here som newe tydynge.

The messengers are introduced to the kings,

Thanne seyde Leownces to these kynges tho:
"Behold these Messengeres that fer comen Fro!
For they comen owt of gret Bretaygne
with 3ow tweyne to speken, jn certeyne."
and whanne the tweyne kynges herdyn this,

and welcomed by them.

they seyden that they weren welcomen, j-wys.
thanne gret joye to-gederys they Made,
and Ech of other they weren Ryht glade.
Thanne down they seten alle þere jn Fere.

[leaf 122 *d*]

Thanne Axeden the Kynges of Hem there

They are asked about their errand,

what Nede that drof hem jn-to that contre,
For ellys hyt Myhte non othirwyse be.
thanne forthermore, as j vndirstond,
they axeden tydynges owt of here lond,

and about the barons and their king.

and 3yf here Barowns hadden ony kyng
aftyr here owne wille, *with*-owten lesyng.
For of the Eleccyown knewen they ful wel,
and of the swerd and þe ston, Everydel,
that on cristemasse day there gan apere
aforn the Mynstre and the peple there.

The messengers give a full account

Thanne tolden the Messengeris here tydyng,
how that jt was, jnto the Endyng,

9095. MS. *kynge*; cf. ll. 9279, 9788, footnotes.
9101. *Br'taygne*, *r'* corrected from *o*.
9119. Abbreviation mark perhaps added afterwards.

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and of alle the Stryf that was there
of kyng Arthewr & þe Sevene kynges jn fere;
and of the Merveillous Fyr also
that Merlyne amonges hem wrowhte tho,
and Ek of the grete chevalrye
that þe ȝonge kyng Arthewr dyde, Sykyrlye.
aftyr they tolden hem word and Ende
how Merlyn cownseyllede, for hem wende
that they scholden comen to kyng Arthewr
and not Jt to letten for non langowr;
where-offen Vlphyn preyde jn haste
answere to haven, Er that they paste;
For here tyme was schort therto,
and here nede ful gret also.
thanne answeryd the kynges ageyn,
and seiden that—"gret werre we han, certein,
aȝens kyng clawdas jn this contre,
that Mochel Noysaunce doth to owre Meyne.
and ȝyt Emporysched he js jn partye,
But ȝyt we dreden vs now, Sekerlye,
that and we owt of this contre were,
lest he wolde don vs Mochel dere."
thanne seiden the Messengeris to hem ageyn:
"That kepten we not, Syres, jn certeyn,
But Merlyne sente ȝow forto say:
whiles that ȝe walkyn jn his jornay,
ȝe doren not of non damage drede,
For he wyl ȝow both wyssen and Rede."

of Arthur's victory

and of Merlin's advice,

asking the kings to come to Arthur.

These hesitate on account of king Claudas,

who might attack the country during their absence.

But the messengers tell them that Merlin sent them word not to fear.

Whanne kyng Ban & kyng Boors
herden of Merlyne so gret a los,
and Merveyllede Mochel of his werkyng,
that he knew thinges þat weren comeng,
thanne seyden they to þe Messengeris anon,
that syker thens Scholden they not gon,
but hol thre dayes there to abyde;
the Messengeris hym thankyd þat tyde.
the kyng comanded disarme hem anon
(For furthere, certeyn, scholden they not gon,

Ban and Boors marvel at Merlin's knowledge,

and ask the messengers to stay for three days.

9141. *ıoere*, *w* blurred.

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but jn his owne place abyden þere stylle),
and hem vnarmed and ɛsed at wylle.

When the messengers are disarmed, their friends notice their broken shields,

whanne that these knyhtes vnarmed were,
thussone there comen the two knyhtes there,
and beheldyn here harneys and here armure,
Where-offen they merveylleden, j ȝow ensure,
how that here scheldis so to-broken were,
and here harneys so forbled was there.
they preyden hem, of gentrye, the sothe to seyne,
that al the trowthe to tellen hem, pleyne.

are told of the encounter with the seven knights,

thanne begonnen they anon, ful vttyrlye,
alle the trowthe to seyn, ful pleynlye,
Of the vij knyhtes, þat weren so bolde,
[leaf 123 *a*] And How that Hem Asayllen they Wolde.
"But thankyd be god and owre Ladye,
we ben now here jn ȝowre compenye!"
and whanne the tweyne knyhtes herden this,
That of tho Sevene they weren delyuered, j-wys,

and praise the fine exploit.

thanne of hem maden they gret preysynge,
For they hem knew, with-owten lesynge,
that they weren bothe knyhtes worthy,
and for goode men and trewe, certeynly.

King Ban gives them good cheer;

thanne kyng Ban dyde hem sytten anon,
and with worthy deyntes Served hem thusson.

Leonces and Fariens serve them well,

what Leowneces of Paerrne and Phareens
To hem they dyden al here deligens;
of alle tho deyntes that myhte ben fownde
To hem they browhten jn that stownde.

remembering former times in Great Britain.

For toforn tyme they syen in gret bretaygne
hem Servyd with alle deyntes, jn certeygne,
jn tyme of kyng Vter Pendragown,
that kyng Arthewres fadyr was be resown.

Ban and Boors are ready on the third day;

Thussone kyng Ban & his brothyr jn Fere
Forward they gonnen to arayen hem there,
So that Redy thei weren be th[e] thrydde day
with these messengeris to gon forth here way,
and tooken here londys Jn governaunce

9163. MS. *b-haldyn.* 9182. *with*, *h* squeezed in afterwards.
9193. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards. MS. *th thrydde.*

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To Leownces of Paerne, *with*-owt*en* varyaun*ce*, 9196 they leave their lands in the keeping of Leonces, Fariens, and the steward of Bainoik,
For that he was here cosyn Germeyn
and therto bothe good & trewe, jn certeyn.
Therto Pharens was left jn his compenye,
and Ek the steward of Baynoyc, Sykyrlye. 9200
Thanne seyden the kynges to hem there
that—"3yf nede be, aftyr helpe 3e Enqwere." and ask them, if necessary, to send for help;
For they wysten not thanne, jn certeyn,
what tyme that hom they come*n* ageyn. 9204
thanne lefte kyng Ban certein token*yng* king Ban himself would send a ring in case of great need.
with his Barowns of Many a thing.
"and 3it More over, 3yf grete Nede be,
My Ryng j schal sende 3ow, certeynle." 9208
whanne Leownces herde that hyt trewe was
That the Messengeres seyden jn that plas,
Thussone they Maden hem Redy forto go, The kings set out on their journey,
Tyl that to the Se they comen vnto. 9212
So that Schepyd they were*n*, bothe lest & Mest, and have a smooth crossing.
and Esyly over pasten with-owt*en* tempest,
of which Mater this Storye Maketh an Ende,
and Forth to kyng Artheur now doth hyt wende, 9216
that js at londone jn gret Bretaygne,
that logres tho was clepyd, jn certaygne.

Chap. IX.

[leaf 123 δ]

Now Scheweth Forthere this Storye
that from Arthewr the Messengeris go*n*nen hye, 9220 After the departure of the messengers from London (p. 233), cities and castles were furnished with soldiers (cf. ll. 8551 f., 8573 ff.), whom Merlin knew to be trustworthy.
and stuffeden thanne Every Garnesown,
Every good cyte, and Every town,
with arblasteris and seriawntis also;
thus Merlynes comandeme*n*t dyde they tho. 9224
For he knew alle tho that trewe were,
lik as this Storye Reporteth here,
For Mer*l*yne knew ful wel that compeyne,
that be hem Treson scholde neue*re* no*n* be. 9228
and whanne they hadden thus j-don,
thanne to hem cam Mer*l*yne anon,

9200. *Baynoyc*, *o* blurred.
9218. The remainder of the column blank; in the left margin: *obvincō Regum.*

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(Context misunderstood; see Notes).

and seide they hadden Ryht wel j-do.
thanne tolden they to Merlyne vnto
how that be the weye assaylled they were,
and hou of vij knyhtes they deliuered hem there,
Ek with the two kynges j-spoken also,
and how here londys they hadde deliuered tho
To tweyne barouns of that contre,
and the tokene of the Ryng also tolden hee.

Merlin advises king Arthur to meet the approaching kings.

Anon seide Merlyne to kyng Arthewr thanne:
"Goth, ordeyne 3ow to Meten these worthy menne,
For thin owne Men ful Syker they be,
and Born of hygh lynage, ful Sykerle,
and Ek here wyves Jn that same wyse
hyghe Born as ony Man kan devyse."
thanne answeryd the kyng to Merlyne ageyne:
"As thou me Redest, j wyl don, certeyne."
thanne quod Merlyne jn alle haste:

The streets are to be decked, girls are to dance and sing,

"that the weyes ben clensid ful faste,
and þerto alle the Maidenis that þou miht gete
hem to Meten dawnsing jn that strete,
& thus with songe & dawnsyng with-owten þe town
hym so to meten in Merie processiown,

and the whole chivalry to welcome them.

and thanne 3oure-self with alle 3oure chevalrye
Ek hem to Meten ful worschepfullye."
"Now, goode Merlin," quod Artheur the kyng,
"whanne Mai j be seker of here comeng?"

They will arrive on the Sunday morning.

"a sondai next comeng, Er þe owr of Tyerce,
hidyr scholen thei comen bothe heyl & ferce."
whanne that kyng Arthewr vndirstood al this,

Arthur makes preparations accordingly.

thanne aftir Merlines wil he wrowhte, j-wys,
and Merline him tawhte what he scholde do,
and hou to the kynge he scholde speken vnto,
that jn non wise jnterupt scholde he not ben
Jn non thing that he Scholde don other sen.

Vppon this him ordeyned Artheur the kyng
a3ens these kynges to gon Encowntryng.

9231. MS. *seiden*. 9263. MS. *jnteript*.

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thus abyden they stille til vppon the sonday.
thanne myht me sen Men there jn good aray :
the kyng Artheur & al his Baronye,
therchebisschope of dover with his clergye,
thus with processioun they hem Metten, sykerle.
thanne gret kysseng & joye there men myhten se.
thus toward the cyte passeden they there,
where as dawnsyng Many Maidenis were
with Many karoles & Ryht Merye song,
at that tyme was these Maidenis among.
and thus thorugh the cyte thei gonne to Ride
To the grete towr that ilke tyde.
Anon as these kynges to þe paleis weren browht,
grete jewelis and ȝiftis sone weren vpe sowht
and to the kinges presentyd there ;
also cowrseris, palfreyes, & with destrere,
Ek Robes, and armures bothe goode & Riche
To these kynges he ȝaf and to oþer j-lyche.
and al this wrowht he be Merlines cownsaille,
For aftyr hit dede hym gret availle.
So that gret love he gat him there
Of Riche and powre thanne Every-Where,
and of hem that neuere hym sye
Toforn tyme ne aftyr with here Eye.
Ful mochel Merveylleden the peple tho
whens that alle tho jewelis comen fro,
and jn so schort time hit was j-don,
bothe to hye and to lowe þere Riht anon.
So that Eche Man jn his degre
kyng Artheuris Man swor forto be,
and for nothing hym Neuere to faylle
jn pes, in werre, nethir jn bataille.

On the Sunday, Arthur meets the kings in grand procession,
kisses them,
conducts them to the city,
where maidens dance and sing,
and to the Tower
where magnificent gifts are distributed
both to the kings and to others.
Arthur thus wins the love [leaf 123 *c*] of rich and poor;
they wonder where all the jewels come from,
and swear fidelity.

Whanne that these kynges jn þe cite were,
daunsyng of ladies Syen thei there,
Torneyeng of Bacheleris ȝonge,
that alday lasted jnto Evensonge.
More ouer alle the stretis of the cyte

Dancing and tournaments are going on.

9279. *kynge*ſ, *f* squeezed in afterwards.
9301. Abbreviation mark in darker ink, between *i* and *s*.

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The streets are hung with clothe of silk. The weather is fine.

with clothis of Sylk weren hanged, sikerle.
and bothe fayr wedyr and cler hyt was,
For Nethyr Rein ne hayl þat day þere nas.

Lamps filled with balm spread sweet odour all around.

and alle the stretys with lampes hanged were,
and Euerich lampe ful of Bawm was there,
whiche that brenden so Swetely,
that al the cyte þere-offen savourede, trewly,
So that the swete odowr smellyd myhte han be
half a Myle thanne, ful certeinle.

The royal party attend mass,

So that the barouns forth wenten in fere
To the chyf Mynstre anon Ryht there.
there met weren they with processioun,
with cros, Baneris, and gomfanoun.

which is sung by the archbishop,

Therchebisschope the Masse sang, veramente,
and aftyr Masse to paleys they wente,
the thre kynges al jn Fere
with alle the baronage þat was there,

and then have a splendid dinner.

where as Manye worthy viandes weren dyht
þerwith the kynges to serven, as hit was Ryht.
and alle thre kynges to-gederis they sete,
with hem therchebisschope, as hit was Mete;
at on table alle J-Served they were
with Rial deyntes whiche weren there.

At table serve

thanne weren there two 3onge knyhtes
that thyke day the halle serveden outrihtes

Kay, Ulfin, Bretel,

with sire kay, sire Vlphin, and sire Bretel;
that day they deden wondirly wel.
the names of thes knyhtes so 3onge
J schal 3ow declaren Jn Englysch tonge.

Lucans the Boteler, and Girfles.

the ton hyhte Lucans the Botelers,
the tothir sire Gyrfles, a knyht ful fers.
thus *with* these knyhtes the halle served was
with gret deyntes thike day jn that plas.

After dinner, the quintin is raised.

Aftyr noon was vpe set the qwyntyn,
the 3onge knyhtes þere justed wel and fyn,
and Boordeieden there alle theke day,
and aftyrward to torneyeng, with-owten Nay.

9310. MS. *savouredè.*

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So weren they devyded on partyes tweyne,
on Eche side vij hundred, jn certeingne,
of whyche of the Rem of Baynoic, vtterlye,
thre hundred weren in that compenye.
and whanne these parties assembled were,
alle thre kynges weren they there.
and mochel of the clergye þere was also,
and of astronomers that jn þe Rewm was tho.
3it vndir hem alle cowden they not telle
on whiche syde the better befelle,
Sauf only Merlyne he cowde declare,
whiche side the bettere scholde han thare.
Thus the thre Kynges And therchebysschope tho
at Fenestris and wyndowes lokeden tho,
and hou to-gederys they gonnen torneye,
Ek hou that here hors gonnen for to Neye,
and hou that the Erthe hyt denedc also,
So faste to torneyeng gonn they to go.

The knights are divided in two parties.

Clergy and astronomers are present.

[leaf 123 d] The kings and the archbishop look on from a window.

Thanne thus whiles they torneyed there,
Jnto a Renge aperyd thanne there
Sire Gyrfle3, the sone of cardwelle,
vppon a stede that was stowt & felle;
jnto that Renge he Rod ful faste.
& a3ens hym cam on atte laste:
a knyht of Baynoic, that hyht Ladmas,
with sire Gyrfles Mette jn that plas;
and assone as they to-gederis Mette,
Grete strokes on Ech other there sette;
with sperys and scheldes toforn here breest
To-gedires they Mettyn at here Treest.
and so sore to-gederis they Ronnen there,
that Ech vppon other barst his spere,
For worthy knyhtes they weren bothe two,
and Eche be hym-self desirede also:
the toon desired worschepe, trewelye,
The toper Richesse and Seygnourye.
So sore they torneyeden togederis thanne,

(1) First Girflea jousts with Ladmas of Bainoik.

They break their spears.

9344. *jn Comp* crossed out before *weren*.

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that hem thowhte the brayn was owt of h[er]e panne,
and Ek the Eyen owt of here hed,
So sore they torneyed jn that sted.
and Ech of hem to Erthe oper there har,
that jn Swowneng stille they lyen thar.
So that the peple wenden, þat stoden abowte,
that bothe hadden ben ded, with-owten dowte.
For so crwel a fyht Syen they neuere Ere
be-twixen two men that knyhtes were.

Thussone to-broken the Renges anon;
to Rescwen these knyhtes wenten they ful son.
there on partye with anothyr to-gederis gonne Mete,
that on Eyther partye lay jn the strete.
Ek so sore to-gederis Metten they there,
that Eche man on othyr brak his spere.
whanne that here sperys to-broken were,
anon here swerdis they pulden owt there.
So that there a melle began ful strong,
betwixen tho knyhtes hem among.
3yt was there thanne anothyr knyht,
that ful Merveillously bar hym in fyht,
that Lucans le boteler was his Name,
cosin germayn to Gyrfles, a man of fame.
This Lucans so on gan taken there,
that bothe hors and knyhtes he gan to fere.
For so harde he took on thanne,
that his strok ne dorsten abyden non Manne.
he Rente the helmes of hedis adown,
here scheldes caste ouer here arsown,
and swiche Maistryes werken þere he began,
that of hym Merveillede Many a Man.
and so deden these kynges thre,
and of hym Merveilleden jn many degre.

Longe lasted the torneyeng that Tyde
at Londone faste by temses syde.
and 3it knew non Man the bettyr partye,

(2) Then ensues a general rush,

and bear one another to the earth.

spears are broken,

and swords are pulled out.

Lucans the Botaler, Girfles' cousin,

gives irresistible strokes,

and excites general admiration.

9378. MS. *he pāne.*
9406. *from* crossed out before *oũ.*

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ho þe victorye scholde hauen, sykyrlye.
For so many goode men there were
here myht to preven on bothe sides þere.
whanne Gyrfles and his felawe vpe weren sette
and on horsbak þere, with-owten lette,
Whanne they Aventyd Weren Jn that plas,
aȝen they torneyeden with-jnne litel spas.
thanne sire Gyrfles and sire Iwcans jn Fere
Ful grete maystryes begonnen they there,
and of hem of Baynoic goten they lond,
and from here place remeved hem, j vndirstond.
whanne that this they of Baynoyc Sye,
that here Feleschepe gonnen so forto flye,
they comen to rescwen hem with alle here myht,
that toforn not ne hadden comen jn fyht.
thanne comen of Arthewris thre hundred knyhtes
aȝens hem of Baynoyc þere anon ryhtes.
and thus they entermellyd bothe jn fere,
tyl that merveillous werkyng maden they there;
for so sore to-gederis gonnen they ryde,
that here speris to-borsten jn that tyde.
and whanne here speres toborsten were,
anon eche man his swerd drowh owt þere.
and þere began ful gret Tornement
of tho worthy knyhtes, verament.
For a man the sothe myhte knowe,
the worthynesse of knyhtes al be rowe,
and ek of ȝonge knyhtes that þere were,
that lerned to torneyen with scheld and spere.
but of alle othere jn that plas
Sire Gyrfleȝ & Sire Iwcans gonne hem pas.

Whanne hyt was comen to the owr of noon,
Syre kay with xvj felawes there cam anon,
that ȝit non strok j-smeten they hadde;
thussone jnto the reng þere he hem ladde.
So that þe ferste they gonne there mete,
down they hem boren a-myd the strete.
So sore they justed vppon that grownde,
that here speris to-borsten þat ylke stownde.

9416 (Girfles and his adversary are re-mounted. [leaf 124 *a*]
9420 Girfles and Lucans
9424 gain ground on those of Bainoik.
9428 (3) Fresh jousters join on both sides,
9432 and there is a powerful encounter,
9436
9440 in which also novices par-take.
9444

(4) At noon, Kay enters the lists with 16 comrades;
9448 they fight keenly with spears
9452

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and whanne here speris to-broken were,
and with swords. anon here swerdis they pulden owt there.
that so sore they fyhten begonne,
and fowhten, whiles they hadden ony sonne, 9456
Kay, Girfles, and Lucans excel. that sire kay on his partye hadde the gre,
on þe tother side Gyrfleȝ & lwcans, sykerle.
They leave the ground for a while. thanne wenten these knyhtes tho jn fere
Forto aventen hem owt of þe place there. 9460
thanne to that resorted þere anon ryht
(5) Several knights of Baiuoik of Baynoyc Lordis of ryht gret myht,
hos names j schal ȝow telle,
and ȝe wylen herkene to my spelle. 9464
(Usmerant, Gawnes de Bloy, Uriens, Graciens, Bliobers, Placides, and others) There was Vsmerawnt of þe Roche, ful prest in age,
and Gawnes de bloy, & Vryens of þe forest savage,
also Belyas Amorews of maydyn castel,
and Flawndres le Blans, and Graciens the Lel, 9468
and Blyes de la kasse, and Bliobens of desert
with melyadus þe bloys & madyeus of crispes, apert,
and placydas the gays with hem, trewelye;
come to the tournament alle these to torneyeng comen jn compenye. 9472
whanne this fresch peple cam to tornement,
There they so torneyeden, verament,
and drive the other party back. So that non man dorste hem there abyde;
So sore they torneyeden jn that tyde. 9476
(6) Then Kay and whanne Sire kay be-held al this,
that here lond his felawes hadden lost, j-wys,
and there aventyng as he was
& with hym his felawes jn that plas 9480
beheldeu hem of Baynoyc lond
putten his felawes to þe wers, j vndirstond,
Thussone þere hasted hym thanne syre kay
[leaf 124 b] And His Felyschepe With Hym, Jn Fay, 9484
and his comrades return, and prekeden jnto the grettest pres
that he myhte fynden, with-owten les,
and with hym his feleschepe in compenye.
and begin afresh. there gonnen they sore to torneyen, trewelye, 9488
So that but a lytel whyle hadden they ben there.
that they of Baynoyc Scomfyt they were.

9490. *Baynoyc*, *c* squeezed in afterwards.

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thus wrowht Sire kay jn that Turnement,
that his Name declared was, veraiment,
as this storye here-after schal declare,
hos that there-aftyr wil loken thare.

Syre kay, that of his Modyr neuere Norsched was,
but of anothyr woman jn dyvers plas,
a tach of his Norse there he cawhte,
that of hym geten Myhte hyt be nowhte.
3it his Modyr a worthy lady was,
and Moche worschepe cowde jn Every plas,
and perto sche was ful of Bownte
and ful of gentrye in Eche degre.
but this Sire kay a custom hadde,
that he ne Rowhte to speken good oper badde.
3yt he ne spak hit for non velonye,
but Moche pat he seide was but folye.
For often-tymes they that herd hym speke,
on lawgheng they musten sone owt breke
Ek for disport and his Folye,
that jn his speche they fownden, trewelye.
And perto a3enward 3it was he
the beste Felawe that Myhte be.
whanne sire kay cam to tornement,
as to-forn time han 3e herd present,
and Sire Ladmas, that ful wel hadde J-do
vppon kyng arthewrs Men 3it thedirto,
and Sawh his Felawes put to the flyht,
whiche so him grevede anon pere Ryht—
whanne that Sire kay al this beheld,
that his Felawes forsaken hadde pe feeld,
Ful Sorweful he was thanne jn his herte,
and Forth on horsbak he gan to sterte
To Sire Ladmas jn that pres,
and of his Torneyeng he made him ses,
and Made him to Meven owt of pat place,
there as to-forn tyme ful bold he wace,
and so sore smot hym jn the Scheld,

(Kay has a bad habit, taken after his nurse,

not to care what he says,

although he is a good fellow.)

Kay sees Ladmas put Arthur's men to flight,

and rides against him.

9500. *cowde*, *d* immediately corrected from *e*.
9518. *grevede*, the second *e* blurred.

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He tilts Ladmas and Graciens off their horses,

that bothe hors and man fyl jn the feld;
and at þe same strok there also
Sire Graciens trebens to Erthe gan go.
So with that cowrs he brak his spere,
and anon his swerd he drowh owt there,
and Rescwed his felawes Echon.
thussone his Name discried was anon,
how that alle his felawes socowrede he,
that Scomfyt they wenden forto han be.
thanne torneden they alle ayen jn fere,
and of al that day ne dyden not so wel þere.

The kings notice his chivalry.

These jostes beheld wel Artheur þe kyng,
kyng Ban and kyng Boors, *with*-owten lesyng,
and behelden the chevalrye of syre kay,
that he there dyde that ylke day,
and seiden he was a worthy knyht,
vayllaunt & vysable jn Every fyht.

Lucans goes off in another direction;

and whanne Lwcans the Botelers Sawgh kay so do,
hym forto helpe hym Nede not to Go.

[leaf 124 c]

Thanne took He His Hors With His spores Anon,
and jnto the grettest pres he gan to gon,

he bears Blois to the ground.

and smot Syre Bloys so sore there,
that al on peces to-barst his spere,
and to the grownde him bar down Ryht,
and his swerd owt drowgh þere forto fyht.
thanne began þere gret Torneyenge
here felawes to socowr forto brynge.

Girflet, seeing Blioberis and his two comrades

Thanne cam Sire Gyrflez, armed ful bryht,
as faste prekinge as that he myht,
and Sawgh there Blyobers & his felawes tweye,
that abowten Sire kay weren, trewelye.

pressing hard on Kay,

and with here swerdes on hym they leyden faste,
that wondyr hit was he myhte hit laste,
For grete nede of socour there hadde he,
For he was but on ayens hem thre,
and thike thre þe best men were
of Baynoykes meyne þat was there.

9538. MS. *sowel*, *e* blurred.

thanne mette he there with placydes,
and his helm to-barst jn that pres.
Aftyr Rod he to Blyobers,
that thike tyme was bothe stordy & fers,
and smot evene a-myddes þe scheld,
that he there fyl doun jn the feld,
and drowh owt his swerd anon thanne,
and smot sire placydes so on þe panne,
So that sore astoned þere he was,
and from his hors fyl down jn that plas.
Thanne what tyme Syre kay beheld al this,
vp ful sone he hym dressed, j-wys,
and beheld sire Gyrfleȝ, his socourer,
and thowhte that kyndenesse to qwyten owher.
So from that day Evere aftyr-warde
they loveden to-gederis ful strong & harde;
Al the whyle they leveden here,
myht non man departin hit fer ne nere.

breaks Placides' helm,

and brings both Bliobers

and Placides to the ground.

Kay rises,

full of gratitude.

He and Girfles become friends for life.

Whanne S[i]re Gyrfles Sire kay Rescwed hadde,
and thens as he lay thanne forth hym ladde,
thanne aspyde Sire kay on þat hyht ȝeroas,
that hym sore anoyede jn that plas.
anon his Swerd Sire kay owt drowghe,
and, schortly to seyne, there hym he slowghe.
thanne be-gan there gret Noyse & cry
on the tothyr partye there, certeinly.
thanne comen they thedyr fast prekynge,
and ek on sire kayes syde, with-owten lesinge.
So that gret Melle there began,
that hurt and anoyed was many a man,
er alle fyve felawes Rescwed were,
owthyr er to-gederis they mo[w]n semblen there.
but whanne to-gederis they weren alle fyve,
wel mochel deseyse they wrowhte ful blyve.
and ȝif ȝe wil knowen whiche fyve they be,
J schal ȝou here declaren, ful sekerle:
Ferst Vlphyn, Bretel, and Syre kay þere,

Kay strikes Yeroas.

There is an outcry,

and a fresh tumult,

in which the five knights

(Ulfin, Bretel, Kay,

9583. MS. *Sre.* 9586. MS. *jnthat.*
9596. MS. *mō*, *ō* on erasure.

Girfles, and Lucans)

Sire Gyrfleȝ, and Sire lwcans þe botelere.
and whom so Evere þese fyve Metten jn place,
to therthe they wente, ther nas non oþer grace,
For so wel these Fyve gonnen hem be-stere,

are a wonder to all the spectators.

Merveylleng to alle tho that there were.
and how they Myhte so longe Endure,
These thre kynges Merveilleden, j ȝow Ensure.

[leaf 124 d]

So that thus ther Was Ful strong Melle
on bothe partyes there thanne, Sykerle.
and gret poyntes of armes þere was j-do,
and tyl hyt was Even, hyt lasted tho.

In the evening, the kings stop the tournament,

thanne comen these thre kynges adown
this Torneye to breken al and som.
So that they comen jn-to the place
there as this Torneyeng al day was,

declaring both sides equal.

and helden bothe partyes parygal.
Anon thanne comen they jn with-al,
For they cowde not wel declare
on whiche partye the gre schold fare.
and there departed the Torneye anon,
So that Eche knyht to his jn hom gan gon.

They attend even-ong, and go to supper.

and the kynges wenten forth to Evensong,
and aftyr to here Soper gonne they fong.
and whanne the Soper was j-do,

Speaking of the tournament,

of this tornement thanne spoken they tho,
and ho that best bar him thar,
and whiche of armes þat wysest war.

king Ban says that sixteen of his knights

thanne anon hem answerede there kyng Ban,
& seide: "xvj knyhtes j have here than
that jn this Torneyeng bettere han doon
thanne alle the Remnaunt Everichon,

stand highest.

and on this partye heyhte there were,
For stronge & harde they peyned hem here,
and Many merveillous armes dyden they,
Mo thanne at this tyme j kan wryte oþer sey."
so vppon this long weren they jn talkyng,

At last the prize is given

and þanne atte laste for the gre ȝeveng.
So that the los was ȝoven, and the prys,

9608. *Ensure*, *E* corrected from *j*.
9616. *al*, *l* squeezed in afterwards. 9634. MS. *fol.*

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To Sire kay steward aftyr here devys,
To sire lucans the botelere3, and to Sire Gyrfle3,
To these thre for þe beste, wit[h]-owten les.

Thanne whanne the tables j-drawen were,
jnto a chambre the kynges wenten there,
Therchebisschope and Antron ek also,
whiche chambre on þe Rever stood tho.
and with hem these two knyhtes wente,
Sire Vlphyn and sire Bretel, veramente.
thanne thus of Manye thinges they spooke,
and atte laste kyng Artheur gan loke,
and aspyde these two knyhtes with-jnne a whyle.
thanne anon kyng artheur be-gan to smyle,
whanne he bethowhte hym vppon the jorne,
as Merlyne hadde hym told, ful Sykerle,
whanne that on his Message þey wenten, apert,
hou that they thanne spedden jn desert,
& hou from vij knyhtes deliuered they were.
he preyde hem to þe kynges to tellen hit þere.
and thanne the kynges preyden hem also
The sothe hem to telle—"er that 3e go."

After supper, the kings retire into a chamber.

Ulfin and Bretel are with them.

King Arthur smilingly asks the two knights to relate their adventures on the journey.

Ban and Boors echo the wish.

Whanne they herden the kynges preiden so faste,
Bretel on sire Vlphyn lowgh atte laste.
thanne answerid sire Bretel to the kyng:
"what nedith 3ow vs to axen of swich a thing,
whanne that 3e knowen hyt as wel as we,
as Merlyne 3ow hath told, ful certeinle,
So that hyt were not but wordis jn veyn
of swiche thinges to speken, certeyn?"
than answerede anon kyng Ban:
"Now, leve sires, ho þere-of 3ou telle kan,
that 3oure kyng js therto thus preve?"
"3is, Sire kyng, quod sire Bretel, sykirle,
The wysest man of al this Lond

Bretel, with a smile on Ulfin, replies:

"Why do you ask, as you know it as well as ourselves?"

Ban, demanding an explanation,

is told about Merlin.

9640. *Sir'* twice, the latter crossed out.
9641. *lucans* in the left margin; the insertion mark is erroneously placed after (instead of before) *the*.
9642. MS. *wit owtē*; cf. l. 9182, footnote.

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[leaf 125 *a*]

Other of Al crystyndon, J Vndyrstonde."

Ban inquires further,

"Now where Js he?" quod the kyng Ban tho,
"and what his Name, telle thou me also."
"Syre, hit is *Mer*lyne," quod Sire Bretel thanne,
"that we holden Ryht a wys Manne,

learns that Merlin is in Bretel's chamber,

and jn My chambre he lyth to Reste.
he is a Man of cownseyl of þe beste,
For be his cownseyl we comen for 3ow,
wheche we hopen schal ben for 3oure prow."
Thanne spak kyng ban anon thanne
To kyng Arthewr there of this Manne:

and asks to see him.

"Now, good Syre, lete 3e vs now hym se,
For gret lust therto we han, parde,
For *Mer*veilles that we han herd of seye
of that Man jn Manye a weye."

Arthur sends Ulfin to fetch Merlin.

kyng Arthewr seide, with Ryht good wylle
That anon he scholde comen hem vntylle.
Anon thanne sente he For Sire vlphyn,
and preyde hym gon to seken after Merlyn.
And as Sire Vlphyn gan forth to gon,

Merlin meets Ulfin,

Ryht there with Merlyne he Mette anon.
thanne seide Sire Vlphyn: "welcome 3e be;
the kyng wolde gladliche speken with þe."
"j come Ryht anon," quod *Mer*lyne tho,
"For j ne Rekke toforn whom þat j go."

is brought before the kings, and relates of his knowledge and his life.

Thus Entrede *Mer*lyne jnto that pres,
and Many thinges seide, that was non les,
bothen of his konnenge and of his lyf,
there he hem tolde, with-owten stryf.

King Ban's clerk, Guinebant, questions Merlin.

thanne hadde kyng Ban a clerk there,
a wyser Man ther nas nowhere,
and aposyd *Mer*lyne of Many a thyng;
his name was Guinebant, *with*-owten lesyng.
And what Evere of *Mer*lyne he gan to freyne,

Merlin answers,

*Mer*lyne hym answerede anon, certeine,
For *Mer*lyne knew neuere non Maner of Man,
that hym so aposede as he dyde than.

and the kings listen.

And Evere these kynges stodyn ful stylle,

9676 9680 9684 9688 9692 9696 9700 9704 9708

9683. *ban* added above the line. 9692. MS. *gonto*.

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tyl bothe clerkes hadden seid here wylle,
and tyl the dispetesoun was al j-do
ER that ony of hem wolde thennes go.
So that there aqweyntawnce they took,
and neuere there-aftyr hit forsook.

Thanne whanne al this was thus j-don,
Merlyne to these two kynges gan to gon,
and seide: "ȝe ben lordis bothe goode & trewe;
My Lord kyng Arthewr hath sweche to fewe.
beholdeth now my lord and kyng, ful sikerle,
For he ȝoure Sovereyn and lord moste be,
and of hym ȝoure rem to holden vnder gage,
and him to don bothe Fewte & homage,
and he schal ȝoure Socowr and helpe be
aȝens alle ȝoure enemyes, Sykyrle."
"Now, Merlyne, telle vs, we preyen the,
jn what maner he was chosen kyng to be,
and ȝif that Antron wyste, verraylly,
kyng vter pendragones sone he were, trewely."
"ȝe, Sires," quod merlyne, "with-owten lesyng,
that was þe cawse he is chosen kyng.
and of his electiown, with-owten dwere,
they konnen beren witnesse þat ben here,
bothe therchebisschope & vlphyn also;
bothe konne they seyn how hyt gan go."
"Merlyne," quod the kyng thanne,
"We holden the for a ful trewe manne;
þerfore we wolden preyen the for thi lordis sake
of on thyng vs sewr forto make;
And For A trewe man We Knowen the, sekyrlye,
and for non erthely good thou wylt not lye."
"A," quod merlyne, "ȝe wolden that j swore
that hit were trewe þat j tolde ȝow to-fore."
thanne gonnen these kynges to lawghen anon:
Swyche on knewe they neuere but hym alon.

The two wise men become great friends.

Afterwards Merlin asks the visiting kings

to become Arthur's vassals.

These inquire about Arthur's election, and if he is really king Uter's son.

Merlin says he is,

and refers to the archbishop and Ulfin.

The kings want Merlin to make them sure of one [leaf 125 b] thing.

Merlin divines that they wish him to swear to his previous statement.

9712. *hadden*, the first *d* through correction.
9713. *waſ*, *ſ* added afterwards. 9718. MS. *ganto*.
9730. *ſone* added above the line.
9731. *Merlyne*, the final *e* blurred.
9741. *we* crossed out before *man*.

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Merlin is willing,
Thanne seide Merlyne to hem ageyn:
"what ȝe so me axen, j schal tellen ȝow, pleyn."

but puts it off till the next day.
So that Respyt they tooken that Nyht,
Tyl vppon the Morwen hit was day lyht.
thus they departyd here cownseyl thanne,

All go to bed,
and to bedde they wenten Every Manne.
thanne jnto on chambre wente that Meyne:

the kings, the archbishop, Guinebant, and Merlin, in the same chamber.
thre kynges, þe bisschope, Guinebant, & Merlin in compeyne;
For departen wolden they jn non weye,
and namly þis clerk Guinebant & Merlyne, jn feye.
For a gret clerk held hym this Merlyne,
as aftyr this storye Reporteth wel and fyn.

Chap. X.

Thanne to bedde these kynges wenten ful sone,
and alle these Meyne Everichone,

Next morning, when the bells ring for service,
and slepten on the Morwe tyl hyt was day,
Tyl that to Servysse they Rongen, jn fay;
For abowtes halewen-tyd tho hit was,
whanne tyme they weren jn that plas.

Merlin calls the kings.
thanne cam Merlyne to hem anone,
& þere two wyndowes he openede thussone,
For he wolde som lyhte that there were
hem onestely to arayen with there.

They dress, and go to the cathedral.
so that they hem dihte, & gonne to gon
to the chef Mynstre thanne anon.
there therchebisschope the Masse dyde Synge,

There Merlin swears on the Sacrament that Arthur is king Uter's son
and at þat Masse Merlyne, with-owten lesynge,
Swor on the sacrement jn that place
that kyng Artheur kyng vterpendragones sone was,
and that on Ygwerne begeten was he
the same nyht þe dewk was slayn, Sykerle—

and rightful heir.
"So that he is the moste Ryhtful Eyr
That to this lond cowde Repeyr."

9747. *ſeide*, the first *e* blurred.
9758–59. Between these lines there is a blank corresponding to about eighteen lines. Similarly between ll. 10080–81, 10174–75 10258–59, &c.
9776. The *n*-mark in darker ink.

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the same oth Sire Vlphin swoor,
Ek sire bretel, sire kay, that weren thoor.

Ulfin and Bretel take the same oath.

Whanne these two kynges herdyn al this,
that this sewrawnce thus was mad, j-wys,
anon to kyng Arthewr they deden homage,
as to a worthy kyng of hygh parage.
kyng Artheur hem resceyvede debonowrly,
and for Joye he wept ful tendirly,
and there he hem kyste ful often-sythe,
For of tho kynges he was ful blythe.

Then Ban and Boors do homage to king Arthur, who weepe for joy and kisses them.

Thanne to halle every man wente,
And thankyd God With good entente,
where as here mete was redely dyht,
For kynges, erlleȝ, barouns, and knyht.

All return to the hall, [leaf 125 *c*] where a meal is ready.

and whanne that this mete was j-don,
thanne to cownseyl wenten they anon,
merlyne and the thre kynges jn fere,
Vlphyn, Bretel, & ek Sire kay was there.

After the meal the kings go to counsel.

thanne to hem seide there merline anon:
"ȝe ben trewe men þat here ben echon,
For that j knowe as wel as ȝe
that Syker alle trewe men ȝe be.
Beholdyth here now ȝoure Lord & kyng,
this worthy sire Artheur, that is so ȝyng!
and ȝe knowen wel that haterede hath he
of his Baronage, ful Sykerle,
that hym nelen don homage ne Servyse,
as that they owhten be many a wyse,
But with hym thus werre they holde.
there-fore j preie ȝow many folde
that aftyr my cownseill ȝe wolden don,
and good counseille j schal ȝeven ȝow son."

Merlin, commending the faithfulness of Arthur's counsellors, and reminding them of the barons' hostility, ask them to follow his advice.

and they hym answeryd, with ryht good wylle
what so he seyde they wolden fulfylle.

They promise to do so.

"Thanne, Lordynges, wylen ȝe vndirstonde
that here kyng Arthewr is kyng of this londe,

"Well then," says Merlin,

9788. *kynge∫*, *∫* added afterwards.
9792. *kȳges*, *ȳ* through correction.

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"King Arthur here has no wife. I know of a beautiful princess,

and that non wyf haueth now he;
wherfore j knowe on, ful sykerle,
that is bothe comen of kyng & qwene,
and a Fairere Mayden han ȝe not sene,

only daughter of the old king Leodegan of Tarmelid (p. 217),

and is dowghtyr to kyng Leodegan
of Tarmelyde, Ryht a worthy Man.
and no mo children now hath he
but only this lady, ful Sykerle.
More ouer an old Man js that kyng,

and called Gonnore.

and Gonnore hyhte that Mayden so ȝyng;
therto Eyr schal sche ben aftyr his day.

Leodegan has a powerful enemy, king Rion of the Giants.

but gret werre he hath, with-owten delay,
with on kyng Ryoun of Geauntes lynage,
a myhty man & a Riche & of gret parage.

If Rion conquers him, this land will come next,

and he conqwere kyng leodegan,
kyng Artheuris lond next him lyth than.
For ȝif that Tarmalide conqwerid be,
thanne schal neuere kyng Arthewr, sykerle,

and have no peace.

his lond jn pes thanne non whyles holde
For this kyng Ryown that is so bolde.

Hitherto the knights of the Round Table have saved Leodegan.

and ȝif þat the knyhtes of þe Rownde table ne hadde be,
kyng leodogan his lond hadde lost, ful Sykerle.
therfore this were now myn cownsaylle,

Now you all ought to go to him, disguised as soldiers, and stay a year or two.

that thyder ȝe wente, with-owten faylle,
with kyng Artheur jn this Manere
as thowh alle Sowdeours þat ȝe were,
and there a ȝer oþer two forto abyde,
his aqweyntaunce to geten the same tyde.

He will love you better than his own men.

For non whylle scholen ȝe there not be,
that he wel schal ȝow loven, Sekerle,
better thanne hem þat with him now ben,
and that Ryht sone scholen ȝe now sen.
and j vndirtake for kyng artheur here
that to him he schal ben so leef & dere,

King Arthur will marry his daughter,

that his dowhter he schal hym ȝyve to wyve
and Eyr of that lond aftyr his lyve.
For anon as weddyd thanne he js,
anon the jeauntes scholen han knoweng, j-wys;

9825. *ſchal* twice, the former crossed out in darker ink.
9837. *cownſaylle*, *a* corrected from *e*.

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and from that day forward, with-owten lye,
the jeauntes doren not abyden, trewelye,
Not be a gret jorne there abowte;
This is ful trewe, with-owten dowte."

and the Giants will be kept in awe for all future."

Thanne Answerede Anon Kyng Ban,
and to Merlyne seyde he there than:
"My leve frend, j schal tellen the:
what aventure scholde thanne this be
Now to forsaken oure owne lond,
Lyke jn werre as hit doth stond?
how scholde we thanne taken on þere,
with hem that on vs don so werre
and oure londis distroyen & brenne?
wers wylen they don, and we ben thenne.
For but ȝif we jn owre lond abyde,
hit wyle vs hyndren jn Every tyde,
but ȝif that kyng artheures barowns here
oure londis to sosteyne, & we not there.
and ful gret peryl now hit Js,
other men oure londes to defendyn, j-wys."

[leaf 125 *d*]

King Ban replies:

"My dear friend, how can we leave our own land, beset, as it is, by enemies? For they will do still more harm if we are absent— unless Arthur's barons sustain it, which, however, is a perilous thing."

"A, Sire," quod Merlyne to the kyng tho,
"to me ȝe speken, as ȝow lyst forto do.
but j ȝow Enswre, ful certeynlye,
that and ȝe there lesen on penye,
two hundred therfore scholen ȝe gete,
and of this j dar ȝow wel behete.
For ther ne schal comen jnto ȝowre contre
distroccioun nethir to town Ne cyte,
whileȝ ȝe ben jn kyng Artheures presens;
J schal ȝow waranten ful Syker defens.
and there a Ryal Rewm scholen ȝe wynne,
and therto al the Lordschepis þat ben with-jnne,
that this Lond defenden schal Evere with-al
vndistroyed, and lasten for ay & fynal."

Merlin assures them that they will gain two hundred times more than they will lose: none of their towns will be destroyed, but they will win a kingdom.

thanne answerede kyng Ban to Merlyn anone,
and there to hym he seyde thus sone:
"We the knowen for Man ful wys;
J schal the Seyn now Myn avys.

The kings are convinced,

9862. *doth*, *d* corrected from *f*.
9886. *Evc* crossed out before *ay*.

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Sethen hit is so as thou dost telle,
Aftyr thy cownseylle don we wylle.
ask when they are to start, but telle vs now whanne we scholde wende,
and we scholen þere-offen Maken an Ende.
and want to send for their men. and þerto oure Retenu scholen we calle,
that they mown ben Redy alle."
"Al betymes," quod Merlyne tho,
"All betimes," says Merlin. "For hit schal be Midlentone, Er þat ȝe go.
It will be at Mid Lent. and ȝit er that ȝe gon, with-owten faille,
But first we must have a battle with the barons. here moste we han a gret bataylle
aȝens the barowns, that Rysen ben
kyng Artheur to werchen treye & teen.
Therefore call your troops, there-fore j wolde þat ȝe anon Ryhte
to gete as Moche Meine as ȝe Myhte,
station them secretly in a plain in the forest of Bredigam, and that ȝe don hem loggen ful prevylye
jn a fayr lawnde here faste bye,
that js jn the Forest of Bredygam,
there as that Meyne neuer ne cam.
and the barons will have the worse." and dubblefold harm scholen they haue
thanne ony of ȝowre, ȝe Mown ben save."
King Ban asks if it can be done in time. Thanne there anon tho spak kyng Ban,
and there to Merlyne he seyde than:
"ȝif þat for men jnto my lond j scholde sende,
scholden they be tyme hidere to me wende?"
Merlin offers to bring the men "ȝe, certein, Syre," quod Merlyne tho,
"For Ryht wel hyt May be do.
and on this Message, Sire, wyl j wende
alle this Mater to bryngen to an Ende.
For this Message hastyd most hyt be
in time for the battle; aȝens the bataylle, sire, Sykerle,
the whiche at candel-masse schal be-tyde
the forest of Bredygam there be-syde.
therefore ȝoure Meyne Moste hasted be
[leaf 126 a] Hedyr Betymes to comen, Sekyrle.
they will have to ride day and night; For they mosten Ryden bothe day & nyht
this jorne to spede, and they don Ryht.
as for himself, he will be in Little Britain the next morning. and wete ȝe wel, the sothe forto preve,
that j schal be there to Morewen Er Eve."

9914. MS. *tome*, *t* corrected from *c*.

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and whanne the kynges herden this,
here-offen they merveilleden sore, j-wis.
thanne clepede merlyne kyng Artheur anon,
and bad he scholde ordeygne forto be don
bothe arblasteris and ek worthy seriawns
to-gederis assemblen, with-owten varyans,
the moste prevyeste wyse—"that they mown wende,
and with hem plente of vitaylle that ȝe sende
jnto that lawnde that j haue ȝow told;
among to þe peple departe hit manyfold.
and that eche man for hym-self have
vytailles for xv dayes, to kepen hym save,
of mele and Salt flesch ek therto
besiden oþer vetaylles; do ȝe ryht so."
thanne lwcans the Botelers and sire Gyrfles
anon they pasten owt of that pres,
Also Sire Vlphyn and Syre Bretel,
whiche þat weren knyhtes bothe trewe & lel.
Anon seyde merlyne to kyng Ban:
"Sire, as ȝe ben kyng and honest man,
ȝoure Ryng to taken me jn this threwe,
To ȝoure cosin le-ownces that j myhte it schewe,
that the bettere he myhte leven me
of what thing that j hym telle fro the."

The kings marvel.

Merlin advises Arthur to secretly gather his forces,

and send provisions for a fortnight to the said plain.

Lucans and others start off at once.

Then Merlin asks king Ban for his ring (l. 9298),

in order to be believed the better.

Whanne the two kynges herden this,
Of hym they merveylleden mochel, j-wys,
For they wenden, with-owten lesinge,
that no man that was thanne levenge
hadde knowen that he tolde hem there;
so þat sore astoned thanne they were.
"Now, Lordlynges," quod kyng Ban,
"merveille now ȝe not of this man.
For he knoweth al thing that js,
Be hit wel don oþer mys;
be hyt neuere don so prevyle,
he hit can tellen, ful Sykerle."
thanne answerid they sone ageyn:

The kings are greatly astonished that their secret should be known,

and Ban exclaims: "Marvel no more at this man, for he knows every thing!"

Then the others say:

9962. The line was omitted and then written up the right margin

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"Let him have the ring and be gone.

"Sethen hit is so as that ȝe seyn,
That ȝe taken hym ȝoure Ryng anon,
and that he were forth past & gon.

You shall hear more wonders when he returns." Merlin confirms these words,

for ȝe scholen heren Merveilleȝ mo,
whanne that he cometh ȝow aȝen vnto."
"Now, be myn hed," quod Merlyne thanne,
"ȝe han seyd Ryht as a wys manne.
For more of this scholen ȝe han Encres,
thanne oni of ȝow kan seyn, with-owten les."

and gets the ring.

thanne delyverede him þe kyng his Ryng anon,

On his way, he visits Blasy,

and þer-with forth Merlyne gan to gon,
and be Blaysie, his maister, he took þe weye,
and of alle thinges tolde him, Sekerlye:
that jnto litel Breteignes he scholde go;
of the message eke he told him also;

who writes down all these things.

whiche that Blasye wrot in that throwe;
and elles how scholde we hit knowe?

Thus Merlyne from Blase departed anon,
and forth on his message he gan to gon,
and dyde his message al in good tyme,

Early next morning, he arrives at Bainoik, and delivers the king's message.

For he was þere he wolde er the morwen at pryme,
and tolde sire Leownces the kynges wylle,
and the kynges Ryng took hym vntylle.
there they beleved hym anon,
and deden al that was forto don,

[leaf 126 b]

And senten Anon bothe fer and Ny,

Troops are gathered from forty miles around,

and faire Retenu to gaderen, trewly.
So that with-jnne fowrty Myles abowte
thedyr they gadered with gret Rowte,
so that they weren to-forn the cyte
viij dayes to-forn cristemasse, Sykerle;

and keepers are set in the cities:

thanne good warde putten to þe townes alle
that to the tweyne kynges be riht schold falle.

In Gawnes, a fair lady,

jn that on hold they putten a lady Bryht,
that worthy lady was and of gret Myht:
the cyte of Gawnes kepte sche thanne
and with hyre ful Many a worthy Manne.

9974. *oni* added above the line.
9982. MS. *wel hit* (a begun *l* after *we*).

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Ek Phareens there Merlyne preyde also — assisted by Fariens (cf. Notes);
that al his power he wolde do,
and that he hym grawntyd, ful sekerly,
jnto al his power, ful vtterly.
on the toþer syde, jnto Baynoyc cyte — in Balnoik, sir Raier;
they putten a man of gret degre,
Sire Raier, the Lord of Hawt mure,
a worthy knyht and vaillaunt, j ȝou ensure.
and jn the castel of Trebes — in Trebes, sir Graciens
they putten Sire graciens, with-owten les,
the whiche was godsone to kyng Ban.
and jn that castel with him hadde he than
Two sostren of Raynes, the worthiest — with two ladies;
knyht þat þere was be est oþer west.
For it was the strengest castel
of alle þat contre be many a del.
and at mowntloyr, þe castel of kyng Boors, — and in Montloir, sir Placides.
that was don kept with strengthe & foors:
Sire placydes, that was a worthy knyht,
That castel he kepte bothe day & Nyht.

And whanne alle these ordenaunces weren jdo, — These arrangements made, Merlin, in a moonlight night,
Merlyne with his meyne forth gan to go,
and that was be the tyme of Nyht,
For theke tyme the mone schon ful bryht.
and Merlyne condeyede hem the weye — conducts the army to the sea.
From alle enemyes, as he wel kowde, jn feye.
and to the se he Browht hem ful sone;
there Faste to schepe gonne they gone.
and kyng Arthewr, vppon the toþer syde — Meanwhile Arthur makes secret preparations.
To bataille hym arayede the same tyde,
also prevyly as he cowde thanne do.
So that moche peple him cam vnto:
bencheson of tho ȝiftes grete — His liberality and his fame attract great numbers.
that he hem ȝaf, they wolde not lete.
Also oþer peple to hym comen that throwe,
For that they wolden kyng Artheur knowe;
ek other peple hym kam forto se

10024. MS. *ganto.*

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For that they herden of his gret bownte.
So that whanne to-gederis j-sembled they were,
Ten thousand horsemen, x thousend on horsbak redy they were;
For foot-men thedyr wolde he non haue,
for his meyne and vytaille þat he wolde save.
and on þe toþer syde there comen a-down
and wagon-loads of provisions, charyettes with vytaylle alle jn virown
evene aftyr merlynes ordenaunce;
So was hit don, with-owten variaunce.
are quietly brought to Bredigam. and ful prevyly alle j-logged they were
jn a lawnde besyde Bredigan there;
For that was on the prevyest place
that jn that contre owher wace.
All being assembled, and whanne this was al j-do,
merveillously wrowht kyng artheur tho,
[leaf 126 c] whiche that merlyne Hyt plesed ful Wel,
whanne he hit knew, his wyt, echedel.
For anon as that they logged were,
Arthur sets guards in the roads alle the weyes be-sette he there,
that non man therby Scholde passe
jnto his lond, nethir more ne lasse,
but ȝif he were taken and to-forn him browht,
Er that ony jnto his rewm forthere sowht.
to intercept spies, For he kepte that non aspye
his rewm scholde entren, trewelye,
For to certefyen his enemyes
what was his ordenaunce oþer his devys.
and forbids his own subjects to pass that way, For there kyng Arthewr charged alle tho
that to hym belonged vnto,
that non man thyke pas scholde ryde,
tyl hyt were aftyr kandelmasse tyde;
and ho þat dide aȝens his comandement,
To deth he scholde gon, verament.
So that stylle they helden hem every man,
much to the wonder of the rustics. where-offen þe comune peple merveylleden than.
So that thus prevyly this was wrowht,
& sauf þe kynges cownseille wist non man nowht.
Now leveth this storye of this mater,

10040 10044 10048 10052 10056 10060 10064 10068 10072 10076

10046. *with*, *h* squeezed in afterwards.

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and aftyr of þe vj kynges hit speketh here, — The discomfited kings (p. 226),
that at carliown discomfyted were,
as þat to-forn tyme ȝe han herd told here. 10080

Thanne here-aftyr Reherseth this Book,
ho so wele here there-aftyr look,
what Morneng that Maden these vj kynges, — full of sadness
For they hadden so lost alle here thynges 10084
and al the harneis that they hadde,
and al that here Meyne with hem ladde.
So that they sworen and Maden affyance
there-on to ben avenged jnto þe vttrawnce; 10088 — and revenge,
For Er glad scholden ney neuere be,
Tyl they weren avenged, certeinle,
bothe of kyng Artheur & Ek on Merlyn,
the wheche they clepeden his devyn, 10092
be whom they losten al here good;
thus al amased homward they ȝood. — had slowly repaired homewards.
and for that somme Myhten neþer Riden ne go,
hom jn a leter weren they lad tho. 10096
so that smale Jornes forth they wente,
Tyl jnto here lond they comen presente.
so that they soiournede, tyl they hol were; — When their wounds were healed, they held a parliament;
&.with-jnne a monthe a parlement hadden they thore
jn a March that be-twene Engelond was 10101
and scotlond, so that hit stood in þe Middes of þe plas.
and this was the Ende of the parlement, — there they resolved to gather forces
that Every man scholde don his Entent 10104
And Senden abowte in-to Eche contre — [leaf 126 d]
To alle here Frenschepis, where so they be,
and that [eche] of hem to othyr swere
Redy forto ben with scheld & spere 10108
To dryven kyng Artheur owt of his lond, — against Arthur
and hit to Sesyn jnto here owne hond.
So that they token day of assemble — and to meet at Bredigam.
that ost to-gederis forto be 10112
Jn a feld besydes Bredygam;
thus herto assentyd Every Man.

10107. MS. *that of hem.* 10112. MS. *te gederis.*

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Thanne thus departyd the parlement.
Anon Every Man abowtes faste sent,
Now there arrive, with thousands of men, the duke of Cambeny,
So that to hem Repeyrede there anon
the dewk of cambenye & othyr Manyon.
Fyve thousende Men he browhte with hym,
that jn bataylle weren bothe stowt & Grym.
the king of North Wales,
thanne cam there forth Tradelynaws,
that kyng of Northgales tho he was,
with vj thousend of Fyhteng Men.
king Clarion,
and on þe tothyr partye come th[e] kyng clariouns then
with thre thousend Men also.
the king of a hundred knights,
thanne þe kyng of .c. knyhtes cam tho,
and with hym foure thousende he browhte.
the king of Orkney,
thanne the kyng of orkanye owt hem sowhte
wit[h] vij thousend jn his compenye.
king Caradoc of Strangor,
and aftyr hym carados of strangor faste gan hye,
that vij thousend Men of armes hadde
. . . . . .
king Newtris,
thanne cam kyng Newtris, & with hym ladde
Sixe thousend men, that weren not badde.
and king Ydiers of Cornwall.
hym Folewede kyng Ydyers of Cornewaylle
with vj thousend Men, with-owten faylle.
They ride slowly through the country, and send out spies.
So that smale jornes they gonne to Ryde
The contre to Serchen jn that Tyde.
thanne here aspyes abowtez faste they 3ood,
to weten how hit with kyng Artheur stood.
but they that þe March & the weyes kepte,
But these are captured by Arthur's guardsmen.
Fulsone to these aspyes they lepte,
and token hem, and to kyng Arthewr sente,
& anon to presoun they ful sone wente,
So that Tydynges a3en boren they non.
thanne jn here jorne forth gonne they gon,
The kings arrive at Bredigam.
Tyl that they alle j-logged were
vndir þe castel of Bredygam þere.
For thanne they wenden alle han wonne, certein,
but hit was alto-gederis jnveyn.
Their foragers find the land empty,
thanne senten they here forreyerys jnto þat contre,
but ful lytel fowndyn they, Sekirle;

10124. MS. *th kyng*. 10129. MS. *wit*; cf. footnote to l. 10046.
10134. MS. *Suce*.

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For al that good was lad before
jnto castelis and jnto cites thore.
this was wrowht be cownseyl of kyng Ban
and Ek of kyng Boors, a ful wis man.

the goods having been brought into safe places.

Whanne that they aspyden al this,
that the contre thus was warned, j-wis,
anon they Fireden, an gonne to brenne,
and al the contre distroied thanne.

They then begin to burn and destroy.

So that owt of here owne Lond they hadden vetaylle,
as hit scheweth here with-owten Faille;
So that of vytaylle they hadden plente,
as For swich a tyme hit longed forto be.
and whanne to-gederis was al this semble,
Fowrty thousend weren acounted, certeinle,
of clene pyked men to fyhte,
ek worthy werrours and of gret myhte.

But they must send home for provisions

for the 40,000 men.

Thus endeth here now of here gaderyng,
and speketh how merlyn browht to Arthewr þe kyng
Socour and helpe owt of lytel Bretayngne,
as here-after scholen ȝe heren, jn certeigne,
and what meyne þat merlin with him browhte
owt of litel breteigne, where he hem sowhte.

In the meantime Merlin, with his reinforcements out of Little Britain (p. 267),

Forthere tellyth this Storye here
how jn litel Breteygne merlyne spedde there,
what be Leownces of Paerne, j vndirstond,
and Sire Fariens, and Antony of þat lond,
that of Baynoyc tho steward was.
alle to the port comen they in that plas,
and jnto here Schepis they entred anon;
thanne jnto grete breteigne sone gonne they gon.

[leaf 127 a]

embarks for Great Britain.

and it is good reson that ȝe vndirstonde
why that hit was clepyd Breteigne Londe.
j do ȝow to wetene here every man
that aftyr þe distroccioun of Troye, as j kan,

The origin of the name of Britain is this:

After the destruction of Troy,

10158. *warned*, *w* through correction. 10160. MS. *diſtrioed*.
10164. MS. *ſwoich*.—*longed*, *g* roughly corrected from *d*.
10174–75. On the blank between these lines (at the top of column 127 *a*) there is written in a later hand: *where it is callyd brytō*.

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two kings fled from there

hit behapped that two kynges depa*r*tyd thenne
For drede of Gre3ois, as this doth kenne,
lest they wolden hem han slayn;
this caused these kynges forto go*n* thayn.

with a large retinue.

These tweyne kynges with gret Meyne
thens departed ful hastyle,

One of them was called Brute.

of wheche the ton Brewt he hyhte,
that was bothe gentyl & worthy knyhte,

He built a city, and named it New Troy.

that jn his lyve he bylte w*ith* gret joye
a fair cyte, that was clepid new troye;
bencheson that owt of troye cam he,
Troye was clepid that jlke cyte.

The country was called Britain.

Ek the contre thanne clepyd hit was
afte*r* Brewt Breteigne in that plas.
thanne long aftyr, whanne Brewt was ded,

One of his successors, Logrius,

anon kam there a kyng jn his sted,
that Logryvs was his Ryht name,
a worthy man and of gret fame,

improved the city greatly,

that mochel amendyd this cyte,
bothe Towres and walles, Sykerle.
and whanne thus amended was þ*at* town,

and called it Logres.

thanne wolde he 3even hit a Sewrnown,
and after Logryvs Logres cald hit he,
that jn gret breteigne stont, Sykerle.
So that this name dured forth, in feye,
long aftyr that Artheur gan deye.

After Arthur's time,

thanne aftyr the deth of lawncelot,
that kyng Bannes sone was, wel j wot,

a great plague

hyt happede that a gret Mortalyte
jn that-lond was after, certeinle,
bothe of Barowns and co*mun*es also,
that thike tyme deyde*n* so tho.

gave rise to the name of 'Blue Britain,'

and for þe grete Los that they hadde*n* thanne,
Bloye breteygne hit was clepyd of Every Manne.
and why bloye, j preye now the?
leve sire*s*, for this cause, parde:

10195. *lyve* on erasure. 10200. *aft^r*, *t^e* added afterwards.
10201. MS. *thanne* with an *n*-mark superscribed.
10208. *thān*e, *-ne* through correction.
10218. This line was omitted and then written up the right margin.
10222. *cau/e* on erasure.

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For here hertes bothe blw and blak they were,
Eche man for here frendis dethis there,
that they losten be Mischaunce and be synne;
thus Every Frend from othir gan twynne.

the people's hearts being blue and black with sorrow.

Now hauen ȝe herd declared, jn certaygne,
why hit was clepyd the Bloye Bretaigne.
The tothyr prince that owt of troye cam,
Hyghte Corynaws, a Ful Myghty Man.
this corinaus was comen of Jeawntes lynage,
a worthy knyht and of hygh parage.
So that he aryvede fast by that contre,
that thike tyme the Name breteigne scholde be.
therto he was a Merveyllous knyht,
bothe long and strong and of gret Myht.
there arered he bothe townes and castel,
Strongly j-bylt & wondyrly wel;
and aftyr hym the lond he dide don kalle
Cornwaylle jn breteygne of gret & smalle.
So that thorwh hym comen jeauntes Mo,
that to Bretouns moche harme diden tho,
as that here-aftyr now scholen ȝe here
to alle ȝoure wyttes declared more clere.
of the Merveilles that aftyr befalle,
j hope to declaren to ȝow alle,
ȝif that God wile granten me grace & Myht,
helthe of Body, and myn Eyen syht,
owt of Frensch jnto Englysch now wyl j fonde
hit to drawen, that ȝe Moun vndirstonde.
Therfore for herry Louelyche that ȝe preye,
that til this be Endid, he may not deye,
but lyven jn helthe and prosperite;
Now, good lord, grante hit Moot so be.
Forth to my mater now wyl j pase
of Merlyne & his Meine, þat jn the se wase,
the whiche he browhte owt of lytel breteigne,
as here-aftyr declared ȝe scholen here more pleyne.

The other Trojan prince [leaf 127 *b*] was called Corinaus.

The country where he landed,

and built towns,

he called Cornwall.

His descendants did the Britons great harm.

The account of the ensuing events I hope to translate from French into English.

Therefore pray for Harry Lovelick, that he may live to complete this work.

As for Merlin and his army,

10224. *dethis*, *d* corrected from *t*.
10251. In the right margin, in another hand: *J henr' louelich ſkynner' þ^t tranſlated þ^e boke oute of ffrenſſhe in to englyſſhe at þe inſtaunce of harry bartoñ.*
10254. MS. *grnte* with an *ra*-mark above the *r*.
10257. *owt*, *t* squeezed in afterwards.

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they land in Great Britain,

Thanne anon as a-Ryved they were,
vppon the se banke he bad hem there.
thanne Merlyne comaunded Every Man
trues up their harneys, here harneys al forto trossen than;
For that he wolde For non thing
that they Maden non taryeng.
march straight towards the camp at Bredigam, But they holden here Ryht weye
Thyder as Merlyn wolde hem gye,
Tyl that to kyng Arthewr they comen ful Ryht,
there that he lay with al his myht.
So that hym they foleweden alle,
what so Evere there-of myhte falle.
and arrive there on the fifth day. So that be the Fyfthe dayes Ende
To þe Forest of Bredygam gonne they wende,
where as logged was Arthewr the kyng,
that Made gret joye of his comeng,
and logged hem among his ost ful son,
and amonges hem Every day gan he to gon.

After a week's rest, thanne aftyr viij dayes j-Rested they were,
and Merlyne here vetaylle departyd there
amonges hem, Er that he furthere wente.
Merlin says he will visit the three kings (fetch them from London). thanne seide he that he wolde veramente
Gon visiten the thre kynges, where so they be,
and how they ferde, to knowen & to se.
[leaf 127 c] Thanne Seyde Syre Vlphyn to Hym Anon:
Ulfin warns him to beware of his enemies. "Merlyn, be war how that ȝe gon,
For they on the tothir syde don ȝow Manace,
ȝif they Mown geten ȝow jn ony place,
that certeinly ȝe scholen be ded,
and they Mown ȝow geten jn ony sted."
Merlin reassures him, "ȝe," quod Merlyne, "ȝit wyl j not werne
that to these kynges j wyl ful ȝerne.
For of Me geten they non power.
And Ek also amonges hem com j not ther,
Tyl that j haue spoken with Arthewr the kyng;
j ne schal Maken non taryeng.

10272. In the right margin, in a later hand: *bredygam foreſt.*
10274. MS. *Maden.*
10283. *Vlphyn* added above the line; over *y* there is a tag like the one over an *i*.
10288. *ȝow*, *w* squeezed in afterwards.

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and there-fore gouerne ȝe wel this ost,
that non Man Jsswe, nethyr lest ne Most.
For kyng Artheures Enemyes jlogged be
here vndyr Bredygam, ful certeinle,
and Fowrty thousend of hem ben told,
wel horsed Men, hardy and bold,
and but xxv thousend Men we haue;
there-fore we moste loken to kepen hem saue,
and of hem that non j-lost there be,
To this Mater vs behoueth to se."

and asks him to take good care of the army in the meantime,

the enemies being 40,000 against 25,000.

"Merlyne," quod Syre Vlphin thanne,
"hit is bette ȝe sende som other Manne."
"that schal j not," quod Merlyne tho,
"For that arende my-self best kan do
and hem to bringen jn Savete,
that non of here Enemyes hem schal se."
"thanne goth ȝe forth in goddis name,
and he ȝow kepe from angyr & blame."
thanne from hem he wente ful sodeynlye,
that they ne wyste whanne, trewelye.
so that they hem blesseden Everichon,
that so sodeinly he was from hem gon.
Aȝen to the ost wenten they thanne,
and there they charged Every Manne
that owt of his tente they scholde not pase,
but prevyly to kepen hem jn that plase.
So that fowre dayes contenued this,
& þat of þe iij kynges non word they herden, jwys,
Nethir of Merlyn neuere the Mo.

Ulfin still advises Merlin to send somebody else, but Merlin perseveres.

Ulfin asks him to go with God.

Merlin disappears suddenly.

The army is ordered to remain in their tents.

For streyht to londone gan he go
and, as this storye Reporteth here,
on the Morwe er Evensong was he there,
where that he fond the kynges al thre.
and they weren ful hevy, Sykyrle,
For so sodeinly amongis hem comen he was,
that they ne wysten owt of wheche plas.
and whanne they wisten that hyt was he,
Gret joye they Maden, ful certeinle.
thanne axeden they hym how he hadde sped,

Merlin goes straight to London,

and appears suddenly to the kings.

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and seyde: "wel in Every sted!"
Merlin asks the kings to join their army. and bad hem, faste that they scholde hye
To here ost, that hem Bod, trewelye. 10336

Thanne seide kyng Ban To Merlyn:
"bien owre Socours comen wel & fyn?"
He tells them that the auxiliaries have arrived. "that they ben, Syre, ful trewelye,
and kyng Artheuris host ben logged faste bye 10340
jn the lawnde besydes Bredygam;
there ben they logged Every Man.
The enemies, although numerous, but on the tothyr syde Moche peple there js,
Ten kynges corowned, with-owten Mys, 10344
and jn here compenye a dewk also,
and xl thousend Men they hauen & Mo."
"For oure help now be god," quod Antron,
"For mochel Mischef toward vs gynneth gon." 10348
Merlin assures, "ȝe," quod Merlyne to hym Ryht thanne,
"as that j am now kyng Arthewris manne,
and be the oth that j haue hym j-do
and Ek to my maister Blasye also: 10352
be goddis helpe, and that j kan don,
shall be discomfited, [leaf 127 d] To Evel Ende schal j hem bringen Echon.
For so Moche to Done J schal Hem Make,
that they ne scholen weten how on to take. 10356
but gret Bataylle schal there be,
and gret occisiown, ful Sykerle.
without the kings losing more than eighty men. but on oure side ne schal not dye
Not passing iiij score, vtterlye. 10360
and on here syde deyen ther schal
be thowsendis & hundredis of gret & smal.
The kings must start the same night, with provisions for four days. therefore aparaylle ȝow ryht anon,
that aftyr Sowper we Myhten hens gon, 10364
and for Every Man foure dayes vytaylle,
For Ellis be the weye scholen ȝe faille."

10334. *in Every ſt* on erasure; dashes before *in* and after *Every* to fill the blank.
10339. *ful*, *f* through correction.
10347. *help* added above the line.
10352. *maiſt*ᵉ added above the line.
10356. MS. *onto.—take*, *t* blurred.
10362. *thouſendis*, *w* through correction.

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Anon as they vndirstodyn this,
Ful faste they hem ordeyned, j-wys.
and whanne this thing was ordeyned & do,
thanne anon to Sowper gonnen they go.
And whanne they Supped hadden Echon,
thanne axede kyng Arthewr Merlyne anon
3if that armen they scholde hem thanne.
and Merlyne answered & seide: "neuere a manne,
For hit wolde 3ow greven 3oure harneys to bere,
Tyl jnto 3owre ost that 3e comen there.
For 3e scholen neuere dreden of non Man;
swich a weye j 3ow leden now kan."

The kings get ready,

and have their supper.

They are told by Merlin to carry no arms,

as the way will be a safe one.

So whanne that alle j-Supped they hadde,
Every Man to chambre wente ful gladde,
and warme he lappede for the cold,
that non deseyse ne scholden hem hold.
and as hit was the wylle of God almyht,
the Mone schon thorwh-owt al the Nyht.
thussone alle forth gonne they gon tho,
þe thre kinges, Merlyne, & Antron also.
and forth they Redyn al that Nyht,
tyl that hit was a3ens day lyht.
So that they comen Jnto a forest,
there they alyhteden boþe lest & Mest,
and Eten Swich vetaylle as they browhte,
So þat eche man be oþer ful Merye thowhte.
and whanne that they hadden Eten Echon,
the kynges & Merlyne to cownseil gonne gon.
"Sire, weten 3e, Artheur, what j wold Mene?
But Ryht a 3ong Man of armes 3e bene,
and therto a gret Rewm forto Meynteigne.
Now vndirstonde 3e what j schal seyne:
Somme of 3oure barowns with 3ow they be
and also a parcel of 3owre comunealte;
that Maketh 3owre 3iftes, ful sekerly,
whiche 3e han 3oven ful plentevosly.
and þerfore 3if that Evere large 3e were
of 3iftes to 3even bothe fer & Nere,
J 3ow now charge that large 3e be

They start on their journey by brilliant moonlight,

and ride all night.

Then they alight in a forest,

and have breakfast.

Merlin points out to king Arthur the importance of great liberality,

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Of alle of 3oure 3iftes jn Eche degre.
In order to win the hearts of the people. For mennis hertes geten 3e neuere, trewely,
So wel as be grete 3iftes, pleynly.
For therto jnowgh now scholen 3e haue,
Arthur will have enough to give, As Mochel as 3e wilen axen other crave."

"weteth wel, Syre, and vndirstond
for there is a treasure hidden close by. that gret Tresowr js jn this lond;
but vnknowen to 3ow schal hit be,
Tyl that from bataylle 3e comen, sikerle.
and perfore that 3e Marken wel this place,
whanne alle thy Bataylle j-don thou hase."
They go to a well, and mark that spot. thanne ladde he him forth to a welle,
where a tokene he Made, as j 3ow telle,
So that they Merveilleden, pe kynges Echon,
of swich thing as Merlyne hadde pere don,
and Ek they Merveilleden pere also
of swich thing as Merlyne tolde hem tho.
Then they continue their [leaf 128 a] ride, thanne jn here weye they gonne to Ryde,
For there nolden they non Lengere abyde.
So Ryden they forth bothe day and Nyht,
that of hem ne Restede neuere a wyht,
and eventually arrive at Bredigam. tyl that they comen to Bredygam,
where as was logged Many a man.
King Arthur encamps near a clear well with abundant water. So that kyng Arthewr was logged there
be a passyng fayr welle and clere;
and So gret foyson the water owt Ran
Evene thorwh the Lawnde to Everich a man.
The weather is cold. therto the wedyr ful cold was there,
For hit was jn the Mounthe of jeneuere,
viij dayes to-forn the kandelmasse;
that tyme schortly forsothe hit wasse.
After two days, and there Rested they hem two dayes be-dene,
here harneis to dressen and Maken clene.
Merlin advises the kings to prepare a sudden attack, thanne to hem kam Merlyne anon,
& seide: "on 3oure Enemyes now mown 3e gon,
and devyseth now perfore amonges 3ow here
ho pat toforn schal gon 3owre Meyne to lere.
For jn swich a manere scholen 3e gon,
that of hem alle schal weten neuer on,

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Tyl that Evene on hem that ȝe falle
jn þe dirk Morweneng, Er ony man calle.
For ȝif that aparceyved there ȝe be,
aȝens hem mown ȝe not stonden, sikerle.
and doth thus, & haueth non drede,
For aȝens ȝow scholen they han but lytel spede."

to be carried out early next morning.

Thanne Eche Man harneysede hym anon
Jn armes to Bataylle forto gon.
and the vowarde hadde sire kay
with kyng Arthewris baner, jn fay,
and with hym knyhtes bothe stowt & feers:
Sire Girfleȝ & sire lucawns the Botelers,
Marvg de la Roche & Gwynaus the bloys
with dryaunt of þe forest savage & belyas Amoroys,
Ek with hem forth paste Flawndrys the bres;
these viij forth pasten, with-owten ony les,
and with hem foure thousend jn compenye,
the vomwarde to gouernen, ful Sykirlye.
The secund warde hadde Sire Bretel,
a worthy werrowr ful strong and lel;
and thre thousend with him he ladde,
alle goode men and neuere on badde.
The thrydde warde there ladde tho
Sire Vlphyn, that jn armes mochel cowde do;
and in his compenye kyng Arthewr was there
with Many a brown vndir that Banere,
and with hem fowre thousend jn compenye
of worthy Bodyes, an j schold not lye,
that neuere here lord nolden faillen there,
tyl that to þe deth j-browht they were.
thus Eche warde thanne took his way,
and forth they wenten, Er hit were day,
and Merlyn to-fore, the weye to lede,
Rydyng vppon a stalworthy stede.

Preparations are made.

Sir Kay, with king Arthur's banner, takes the vanguard, consisting of many knights

and 4000 men.

Sir Bretel takes the second division.

Sir Ulfin, the third,

in which is also king Arthur.

They set out,

Merlin leading the way.

Aftyr this devisede kyng Ban his Meyne,

After come the forces of Ban and Boors:

10447. *aparceyved*, the second *a* corrected from *e*.
10452. *Bataylle*, *t* blurred. 10457. *Marvg* through correction.
10464. *and*, *d* squeezed in afterwards.

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and ek his brothir king Boors, ful sekerle,
Sir Farien, with king Boors' banner, commands the first division, So that to sire pharens tooken they þe ferste warde
vndyr kyng Boors baner to ben here garde,
and with hym that tyme forth þere wente
Sire ladmas with riht good entente,
and sire moret de laveye forth jn that pres,
Syre graciens the Bloys & pales Trebes
with Blyobers & sire melidyaus in compenye,
and with hem Sire madevs jn gret hye.
So that thre thowsend with him wente
[leaf 128 b] Of Ryht goode Bodyes, Veramente.
Sir Leouces, the secunde warde of kyng Ban
Sire Leownces of Paerne ladde than,
and with him foure thousend ladde he
of goode bodyes jn his compeyne.
king Boors, the third, the thrydde wynge ladde kyng Boors,
that of non werre took he non fors,
with fowre thousend j-armed owt ryht,
that evere weren redy forto fyht.
and king Ban, the fourth, the Fourthe Bataylle ladde kyng ban,
Jn alle degrees a ful worthy man,
Sir Liane, his steward, carrying his banner. and his baner he took forto bere
To sire lyawne, his steward, there,
and foure thousend jn his compenye
with hym bothe forto lyven & dye.
and whanne that all redy they were,
They ride quietly forth in the still moonlight night. an esy pas they pasten forth there.
and hit was tho past the mydnyht,
And þerto þe mone schon ful bryht.
Ek therto þe wedyr was ful stylle,
Ful preve & esy at here owne wylle.

Now of this sesyth this storye,
In the meantime, some Irish kings, and to hem of yrlond hit doth now hye,
and of the kynges that to hem marched be,
as here-aftyr scholen ȝe heren and se.

Now cometh hit here to Remembraunce,
Brangors, that kyng Brangors, with-owten variance,

10488. *Gret hye* on erasure.

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and kyng Margans, with hym there was,
Ek kyng hardybrans jn that plas,
and with hem kyng Amynadas,
that vncle to kyng Augwys was,
whiche vter pendragon browht in bale
and him Slowhe, as Reherseth this tale—
and whanne they herden telle þat the Barowns
here londes hadden left and Garysouns,
and to kyng Artheur comen they were
jn his werres to helpyn him there,
thanne these xj kynges jn fere
Moche peple to-gederis gadered there,
So that they hadden thrytty thousend men
on horsbak with hem to Ryden then,
with-owten Footmen gret plente,
and the contre distroyede, ful sekerle,
and slowen the peple, and deden owtrage,
and jn that Lond dyden ful gret damage.
For Euere as they Reden, they stroyed down Ryht,
therto they ne leften on lyve non wyht.
and to þe castel vandalyer in Cornewaylle
they leyden a sege, with-owten faylle;
and neuere Remeved myhten they be,
Tyl thedyr cam kyng Artheur, ful sikirle.
But Whanne Kyng Arthewr Herde of al this,
and the kynges that with hym weren, j-wys,
So whanne that acordyd they weren Echon,
Fulsone on here weye thanne gonne they gon.
but no More tellith this Mater now here,
Tyl that to kyng Arthewr don we pere,
and of Merlyne, and to kyng Ban,
and of kyng Boors, how they spedden than:
how jnto Bataylle that they gonne gon,
Ayens the xj kynges that weren here fon,
that Remeved weren to Bredygan,
The wheche atte Sege þere lyen than.

Margans, and nine others,

hearing of Arthur's campaign,

gathered an army,

devastated his country,

laid siege to a castle in Cornwall,

and could not be removed, until Arthur himself came [leaf 128 *c*] thither after his reconciliation with his opposers (Ch. XXIX).

As for Arthur and his allies

at Bredigam,

10525. *kyng* twice, the former crossed out.
10530. *horſbak*, *o* blurred.
10551. *Bredygan*, *r* corrected from *e*.

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Thus here Reporteth this Storye
they march to attack, how that kyng Arthewr his ost gan gye
and the kyng Ban his bataylles also
ayens the xj kynges forto go.
unknown to the opposing kings, But these xj kynges wysten non thyng
of kyng Artheures ordenaunce ne of his comeng;
So that nyht to bedde wente every man,
For of kyng Artheur rowhten they not than.
but hit happede wel that nyht,
who all sleep in the tent of the King of a Hundred Knights. that þe xj kynges to-gederis j-plyht
with the kyng of an hundred knyhtes were,
For drede of non man hadden they there.
There king Loth dreams of a great wind, jn the mene whyle that they Slepten so,
kyng loth jn a wondyr drem fyl tho:
hym thowhte that so gret a wynd þere was,
so merveillous and boystows, jn that plas,
that houses and clochers hit threw adown,
with thunder, and aftyr of thondyr he herde a gret sown,
that hym thowhte al the world, j-wys,
earthquake, hit astoned & qwook for drede of this.
and aftyr him thowte, ȝyt say he more:
and inundation, a gret passyng water that was thore,
that alle the howseng it bar a-down,
and dreynte the peple jn virown;
endangering also his own life. & hym-Self in peryl hym thowhte he was
There to ben persched jn that plas.

Jn this maner dremede Sire loth, the kyng,
When he awakes, he wonders at his dream, and sone after he fyl jn wakyng,
and of his dreme he wondrede, j-wys;
he gan hym blesse, & seide: "what meneth this?"
and tells his retinue of it. and to his meyne he wente anon,
and tolde hem of his avisyoun.
They ask where he saw the sight. thanne axeden they hym anon ryht
jnto what party he Say that Syht.
He says it came from the forest. and he seide, from the Forest syde,
that thens hyt kam, him thowhte þat tyde.
Then they declare that it forebodes a battle; thanne seiden they, with-owten faylle
that with-jnne schort tyme to hauen bataylle.
thanne eche man awok oþer anon,

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So that to armes faste gonne they gon,
and awoken alle here compenye,
Forto serchen the contre gonnen they hye.
with this the bataylles togederes were,
the xj kynges and Artheur jn fere.
So that Merlyne hastyd forth More Meyne,
That to-gederis they Metten, ful Sykirle,
they that the contre Serchen scholde
and Artheurs Meyne, hos wol oþer nolde,
To-gederis they weren, Er they jt wyste,
and Merlyn to-fore Rod for truste.
and whanne kyng lothis meyne say this,
So moche peple þere armed, j-wys,
they axeden of him that Rod tofore,
what peple it js, was armed thore.
Merlyne seide: "Arthewris Meyne;
this lond to chalange hider comen we
aȝens hem that him don defende
his lond to Entren, Er than they wende."

[leaf 128 *d*]
they arm, wake their comrades, and ride out to search the country.
Thus parts of the two armies collide.
King Loth's men call out: "What people is this?"
Merlin replies: "Arthur's men; we come to challenge this land!"

anon as they thanne this worde herde,
aȝen ful faste Bakward they ferde.
and whanne to the ost they comen ageyn,
Anon thanne they gonnen cryen & seyn:
"Treson, Treson amongeȝ vs now js,
and falsly we ben betrayed, j-wys.
as armes now bothe bacheler & knyht,
For ȝe hadden neuere More nede to fyht."
So that Every Man to his harneys Sowhte,
but sone jn gret deseisse weren browhte.
ȝit of on thing hit happede hem wel:
that here hors weren sadelyd Eche del.
but so sore j-hasted neuere they were,
as as theke tyme they weren there.
and whanne that harneyssed they weren Echon,
a wondir aventure Fyl hem vppon:
Merlyne swich a wynd amongeȝ hem sente,

Then Loth's men fly back,
and alarm the camp.
All run for their arms,
their horses standing ready, with the saddles on.
Now Merlin sends them a wind,

10592. *faſle*, *t* almost obliterated.
10615. The first *r* almost obliterated.
10620. *gret*, *g* corrected from *d*.

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which blows down their tents,
that hit down blew bothe pavylown and tente,
and vppon here hedis hit Fyl a-down,
So that they weren Encombryd Echon.
and perto the storm so strong there was,

and prevents them from seeing one another,
that non Man othir sawh jn that plas.
and this distorblede hem wondyr sere,
Er that alle Fullich Redy þey were,
which that Tornede hem to gret damage

whilst Arthur's men slay and destroy.
be Artheuris Men, that dedyn owtrage,
that Slowen and Maden distrocciown
of mochel of the Meyne jn virown.

The hostile kings flee into the field,
But the xj kynges that departed were,
and jnto the pleyn feld weren fled for fere,

and set a bush on fire to collect their men.
they setten a busch on lyht Fere thenne,
therby to hem to gaderen thanne.

Those who can escape the violence of Arthur's men,
and so they deden, as they myhten gon,
For of hem pyte Artheurs'meyne hadde non,
So that Er they knewen the day lyht,
thre part of here Meyne weren slayn jn fyht.
whanne they of the ost behelden al this,
that ajens hem was so mochel peple, j-wys,

flee to their banners, where horns are being sounded.
Eche man fledde to his Banere,
where as þe horn herde he sownen there.
For these kynges to-gederis j-gadered were
Fast by thentre of the forest there.

Thus 20,000 men re-assemble;
So that lytel and lytel they gonne Releve,
Tyl xx thousend they myhte preve.

10,000 flee,
and x thousend torned forto fle
on dyvers partyes, ful Sykerle,
with weping, cryeng, and with gret Mone,
For the harm that they hadden Echone.

and 10,000 are lying on the ground,
and x thousend atte grownde lay down Ryht,
[leaf 129 a]
What Slayn and Maymed Every A Wyht,

unable to help or hurt.
that non other there Socouren ne May,
Ne non Man deseisen be Nyht and day.
Whanne Artheur beheld, al this herbergerye

10634. *þey* added above the line.
10641. *ffer'*, *r'* squeezed in afterwards.
10644. *Artheurs*, *A* through correction.
10650. *horn* added above the line. 10652. MS. *faſtby*.

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was thus Remeved, & so sodeynlye,
To Merlyn kyng Arthewr cam anon,
and axede of hym what he scholde don.
"J schal 3ow telle," quod Merlyne thanne,
"3e moste now werken as a wys Manne.
vp to 3one passe 3e schole now gon,
where as these Meyne be Rested echon,
xx thousend jn on compenye,
and a3ens hem that thou fyhte Manlye.
and to 3ow schal comen jn Socowreng there
kyng Ban and his Brothyr so dere,
and from owt of the Forest scholen they gon.
and whanne the tothir partye loketh hem vppon,
So Sore abawed thanne scholen they be,
that lytel defens jn hem Scholen 3e se."
thus Ech from othyr departyd thanne,
and took But lytel Reward of ony Manne.
So whanne they thus to-gederis Mette,
Manye harde Strokes weren there sette
with swerdis on helmes, and scheldes to-broke,
and sperys al to-schateryd, as seyth the boke.
with that cam kyng Ban & kyng Bors also
jn socowreng of kyng Arthewr tho.
there myhte men Se knyhtes down throwe,
and ful thykke jn the weye they lyen ful lowe,
and al the Feld there Blody was,
So moche peple was Slayn jn that plas.
thanne Syre kay, that on pas kepte,
Ful angwyssowsly thedyrward he lepte
with thre thousend jn his compenye;
a3ens xx thousend than gan he hye.
and whanne the xj kynges on a rewe
behelden hem-self so Manye & þe toþer so fewe,
thanne sore aschamed weren they Echon;
thussone began there gret Bataylle anon.
Thanne so faste they to-gederis held
Bothe with swerd, spere, and scheld,

10664 Then Arthur asks Merlin what to do.

Merlin replies:

10668

"You must attack those twenty thousand;

10672

Ban and Bors shall help you from the forest side.

10676 That will throw them into confusion."

10680

Arthur's division makes a violent attack,

10684

falling and killing.

10688

Sir Kay comes

10692

with 3000 men.

The hostile kings, ashamed at the small number of the assailants,

10696

hold together firmly,

10700

10680. *Bnt*, *B* corrected from R.
10684. MS. *alto fchateryd*. 10695. MS. *they*.
10699. *thãne* crossed out before *they*.

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That þe scheltrom onnethis brekyn th[e]y myhte;
So Sore the xj kynges gonnen to fyhte.
but cannot endure long. but longe myhten they hit not ENdure,
the stowr so strong was, j 3ow ENsure.
Ulfin rides into the press. Thanne cam Vlphyn jn ryht gret haste,
and thorwgh that MEyne fulsone he paste.

And whanne with-jnne hem that he was,
Fulsore he fawht there in that plas.
and so they cryde and so they ferde,
The din of the battle is heard a mile off. that an hol MYle the Noyse was herde.
So that wondir strokes weren there set
on scheldis and helmes, whanne they met,
and EK MAny man ded there was,
and MAnye hors to grownde wente jn that plas.
So that MOchel harm was there do;
Ulfin is unhorsed, and Vlphyn onhorsyd on grownde was tho.
Thanne Say Bretel his Brothyr on grownde,
and ful faste he prekede thedyr that stownde.
but thowgh that Vlphyn on grownde were,
but defends himself with his spear. 3it he defendid him with his spere,
that no man dorste hym there comen NY;
So sore he fawht and so MAnly.
Bretel comes to his relief, whanne Sire Bretel sawh that hit was so,
his hors with the spores thanne took he tho,
throwing Ulfin's antagonist off the horse. and him so sore he smot that Tyde,
hym that on Vlphyn there dide abyde,
that bothe hors and MAn there wente to grownde;
So sore he hym smot that ylke stownde.

King Clarioun rides against Bretel; whanne kyng clariouns beheld that chevalrye,
Ful angry he was and þerto RYht sorye,
and a3ens Sire bretel he gan to RYde
[leaf 129 b] His felawe to socowren that ylke tyde.
Bretel meets him; Whanne sire Bretel Say hym come RYding so,
a3ens hym faste he gan to go,
and they to-gederis sone MEtten jn fere,
their shields are pierced, that bothe here scheldis thorwgh-persched were;
So grete strokis & harde smyten they tho,

10701. MS. *thy*. 10726. *ther'*, *r'* daubed.

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For worthy knyhtes weren they bothe two.
So sore they fowhten, that hit was wondir,
Tyl bothe here speris borsten on sondyr, 10740 their spears burst,
and bothe here scheldes flowen jnto þe feld;
Swich strokes there ech to oþer gan ȝeld.
and ȝit Sorrer to-gederis they mette,
for ech swich strokis on oþer sette, 10744 they give each other heavy strokes with their swords,
here eyen hem thowhte out of here hedes wente;
So sore they fowten there, veramente.
and therto so sore they astoned they ben,
and ek here hors, as they that hyt Syen, 10748 the blood streams from their horses' sides
that they ronnen al there on blood;
So depe jn here syde the spores wood.
and therto with fowndryng here hors also
on here knes non skyn beleften tho, 10752 and knees,
So that hyt ran owt blood ful cler,
as they in the weye reden ther.
and so longe atte the grownd they lye and eventually they lie
and so fowle astoned there, trewelye, 10756 in a swoon on the ground.
that they ne knewen nethyr day ne nyht;
So stronge to-gederis they weren jn fyht.
So ferforth they wenden that hem beheld,
that bothe hadden ben ded þere jn þe feld. 10760
So that on bothe partyes they comen ful blyve Both parties come to rescue:
To reskwen tho knyhtes and saven here lyve.
For they wenden, ded that they hadde ben,
on bothe partyes, as they hem Syen. 10764
but whanne Sire kay this beheld, Sir Kay
that Sire Bretel lay jn the feld,
Thedyr he gan hym ful faste hye
Sire Bretel to Socowren, Trewelye. 10768
Thanne thre kynges aȝens hym comen ryde is encountered by three kings;
with gret anger, haterede, & with gret pryde;
with these aȝens kyng Arthewr they were
what that they cowden with scheld oþer spere. 10772
and þe toþer xj kynges, verament,
Ful harde they fowhten and with good entent,
amongis whom Sire Gyrfleȝ beten he was Sir Girfles,

10747. *ben* crossed out before *aftoned*.
10755. *fore* (?) crossed out before *longe*.

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and Lucans are unhorsed;

and Lwcaun*s* the Botelers jn that plas.
Thanne kyng Brangors & kyng Ydyers
as two kynges bothe stowt and Feers,
ek kyng Augwyseax and kyng Vryens
eche with o*per* rod forth jn presens.

there is a general tumult.

So that there began ful strong melle
bothe partyes to reskwen, Sekerle.
for Ful merveillous weren the strokes and stronge
that thike partyes weren there amonge.

Kay puts Girfles on King Newtris' horse,

So that with fyn fors and strengthe there,
among alle the enemyes that *pere* were,
there reskwed sire kay with strengthe & myht
Sire girfles, and horsyd hym anon ryht
vppon kyng Newtres, with-owten lye.

and throws down king Loth with a truncheon.

and *per*to kyng loth, ful certeynlye,
with a tronchon of a spere was so bete,
that sothely he wende his lyf to lete.

The King of a Hundred Knights,

And jn this mene while there kam anon
the kyng of an c knyhtes ful son
and with hym xl knyhtes of prys,
as he wolde chesen at his devys,
the beste that weren jn his compenye
amongis alle o*per* that he cowde dyscrye.

seeing Kay's achievement,

and wha*n*ne *pat* he sawhe sire kay *pere* present,
that kyng loth So hadde beten, verament,

[leaf 129 c]

Wherfore ful sory He Was that tyde,

rides against him,

and faste thedyrward he gan to ryde,
and toward Syre kay he rood ful faste,
whyles that the breth of his hors myhte laste,
and there so sore to hym he rod,
and non lengere there he ne abod,

bears him to the ground,

and smot Syre kay so jn the Scheld,
that down he fyl there jn the Feld,

and leads his horse to king Loth.

and took his hors with-owten more,
and to kyng Loth he ladde hit thore,

10783. *for* added afterwards in the left margin.
10785. *ſtrengthe*, *r* corrected from *e*.
10787. MS. *the*^{e}, corrected from *he*, *t* being added in front (in the margin), the *er*-mark at the end.
10794. MS. *ful fon*. 10799. *ſawñ*, *w* corrected from *y*.

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and seide: "syre, where is ȝoure thowht?
Lo, ȝoure enemyes hors j haue ȝow browht!
Now worth vpe here with ryht good chere,
and on ȝoure enemy ben avenged here.
For this day han ȝe lost mochel thyng
of worschepe that belongeth to a kyng."
So vppon that hors he wente anon,
and toward Sire kay gan he gon.
and whanne Sire Gyrfleȝ this beheld,
That Sire kay lay in the feld,
and Lwcans bk dyde also,
how that Sire kay suffrede anger & wo,
Ful Sorweful they weren thanne, trewelye,
and faste thedyrward they gonnen hem hye
with two Lawnces bothe stowt and grete;
with som of these meyne there gonne they mete.
So sore they cowntreden that jlke stownde,
That ech two knyhtes þere bar to grownde,
and took þe best hors be þe reyne anon,
and there-with Sire kay presentyd fulson.
thanne he hym horsede, for nede he hadde,
For ferst he was ful sore be-stadde.
thanne the kyng of an hundred knyhtes
and kyng loth with hym anon ryhtes,
that with strong forse, myht, and mayn
kyng Newtres of Garlot they horsede ageyn
on morettes hors de la Roche.
thanne to kyng ydyers gonne they Reproche,
and Sire Gwynaws the bloys hors they took,
and þere-onne hym horsede, as seith the book.
and the dewk Escan of kambenie
was horsed also anon, with-owten lye,
vppon dryauntes hors of the forest Savage,
that toforn jn bataylle dyde gret owtrage.
and whanne alle these meyne j-horsed were,
thanne thowhten they to ben avenged there
vppon here damages, that they hadden toforn;
but er they wente, al was forlorn.

He exhorts king Loth to take revenge.

King Loth rides against Kay.

Then Girflee

and Lucans

also hasten thither,

bear four knights to the ground,

and remount Kay.

The King of a Hundred Knights and king Loth

remount king Newtris,

king Ydiers,

and the duke of Cambeny.

They are all bent on revenge.

10822. *kay* inserted afterwards above the line erroneously before (instead of after) *Sire*. 10830. *anon* crossed out before *fulson*.

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Thanne thowhten the viij kynges tho,
that ful wel they wenden hauen j-do,
but lyhtly they losten al jn fere.
King Arthur coming to the assistance of his men, For kyng Arthewr fulsone aspyde there,
and kam jn comforteng of his meyne,
mk thorwh that meyne paste he, sykerle,
and so the hors with his spores he smot,
that owt hit sprang the Fyr so hot.
and finding Ulfin and Bretel unhorsed, And sire Vlphyn fond he growndyd there
with his swerd on hande hym forto were
and Sire Bretel at gret mischef also,
that vnnethis to horsbak myhte he go.
wherfore ful sory that tyme he was,
and forth he prekede jnto that plas:
rides against the king of North Wales, with a spere bothe myhty & strong
jnto the pres there gan he fong,
and there mette wyth Tradelamaund,
kyng of north wales, as j vndirstond.
anon so sore he there with him mette,
[leaf 129 d] And swych a Strok He on Hym sette,
and smot hym evene amyddes the scheld,
fells him, that over he fyl there jn the feld.
therto his left Scholdre he smot a-down,
that he fyl there ouer the hors arsown.
takes his horse, kyng Arthewr the hors took jn that plas
be the Brydel, that ful wel gylt was,
and leads it to Sir Ulfin. and lad hit to Sire Vlphyn anon,
and bad that he scholde faste vp gon
on hors-bak to ben avenged there
vppon his enemy, that dyde hym dere—
"and thenketh vppon the grete velonye
that ze han Suffred, and gret anoye."
Ulfin thanks him. thanne horsede hym Sire vlphyn hastely,
and Seyde: "sire kyng, now gromessy!"
He rides forth with king Arthur. anon he prekede jnto that pres,
kyng Arthewr & he, with-owten les.
thanne there began so strong melle,
that pyte and rowthe hit was to se.

10852 10856 10860 10864 10868 10872 10876 10880 10884

10864. MS. *jnto to the.* 10877. MS. *onhors bak.*

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For there broken they the buschschement
that vppon his meyne there was present,
So that they vppon the tothyr partye
Ful mochel harm cawhten, Sekerlye.
and ȝit half meyne more they hadde,
thanne kyng Arthewr thedyr with hym ladde.
So that gret occision þere thanne was
of many bodyes jn that plas.
So that kyng Arthewr merveilleȝ wrowht þere,
that eche man dradde hym every where;
So that no man dorsten abyden his hond,
So spetowsly he took on with his brond;
For that tyme dorst hym non man abyde,
So sore he fawht that ylke tyde.

They do the enemy much harm.

King Arthur fights wonderfully.

Whanne the kyng of an hundred knyhtes
Sawh Tredelemaunt anon ryhtes,
that at þe erthe stille he lay,
Ful Sory he was that ylke day
(For he lovede hym ful specyaly),
and faste ageyn Artheur he gan hym hy,
and his hors with the spores he smot
aȝens kyng Arthewr evene foot hot,
and hym ful spetowsly smot jn that plas,
so þat kyng Arthewr sore astoned was.
and whanne kyng Arthewr that strok felte,
anon his lyvere abowtes he delte,
but ȝit sorye he was, ful trewelye,
for sire kay, that was jn his compenye.
kyng Artheur left vpe his swerd anon,
and to þe kyng of an hundred knyhtes gan he gon
and thorwh the left Scholdere han hym bore.
that beheld anon the toþer kyng thore;
and whanne he sawh the strok comenge,
aweyward faste gan he flynge,
and his scheld vppon his hed he caste.
but kyng Arthewr to hym þere thraste,

The King of a Hundred Knights, seeing his special friend on the ground,

rides against king Arthur

and strikes him.

King Arthur tries to strike his enemy in return;

but the latter puts up his shield;

10917–18. *left Scholdᵉ* corrected from *helm Scholde;* the original *bore* altered into *bere;* the stressed vowel of the rhyming word (in 10918) might be read either *e* or *o*.

10921. *ſcheld, d* squeezed in afterwards.

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the stroke cleaves the shield,
and so sore smot hym vppon the scheld,
that hit flew half jnto the feld.

descends on the horse's head,
So that his strok discendid there
on his hors hed, with-owten dwere;

and makes horse and rider tumble. Sir Kay takes
So that bothe to grownde they wente.
and þat beheld syre kay, veraymente,
and say that hors astray there gon,

the horse to Antron.
and to his fadyr Antron he ladde it anon.
So that jn the sadel ful sone he was,
and þereof was joyful jn that plas.

Antron rides against Margamur, the steward;
thanne ajens Margamur, the kynges stewarde,
Sire Antron with his hors Rod ful harde,
and badde hym greten wel his lord & kyng,

sends jeeringly his compliments to the king,
that of an hundred knyhtes hadde governyng—
"And for his Love j schal the mete,
[leaf 130 *a*]
For For nothyng J ne Wele Hyt Lete."

and fells Margamur.
that thorwh the Ryht Scholdere he smot him thanne,
and to erthe he Bar hym, hors & manne;
So thanne on hym there barst he his Lawnce.

The horse he takes to Sir Bretel.
and with that hors sone gan he Bretel avance,
and to hym hit ladde thorgwh the pres
(For tyl he hym fond, he wolde not Ses),
of whiche hors Sire Bretel hadde gret nede
owther Ellis of sum othyr, so god me spede.

Bretel gets up,
thanne was fulsone Sire Bretel on lofte,
and abowtes him he lokede ful ofte,

sees Sir Lucans on the ground,
and Syre lwcawnes Ryht sone he say
down vppon therthe there he lay,

defending himself
and vp keuerynge was, and defendid hym faste,
whiles ony strengthe jn hym myhte laste;
that gret Joye hit was hym forto se,

against fourteen,
For abowtes hym xiiij there weren, sikerle,
and he nas but hym-self al alone;
but for al the power that they cowden done,
owt of that place hym Remeven ne myhte;
and [this] beheld Sire Bretel anon Ryhte,

and rides to his relief.
and to hym there prekede jn that pres.
So whiche þat ferst he mette, with-owten les,

10926. *On*, o corrected from *h*.
10958. MS. *and beheld*.

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thorwh the helm he claf atwo hys hed,
that jn the feeld he fyl down ded.
The Secund he smot so in the scheld,
that arm and al flew jnto þe feld.
and Sire Gyrflez, that Sire lwcawns was by,
Sore hym defendyd an ful myhttyly.
3it ek anothyr Sire Bretel Smot,
That at his feet he fyl ful hot.

He cleaves the head of one,
cuts off the arm of another,
and throws a third to the ground.

Whanne that Sire Gyrflez Sawh he had soco*ur*,
Ful manfully fawht he thanne jn that st*our*,
and the ferst that he mette there,
his arm of smot he qwyt & clere,
that to the erthe he Fyl down ryht.
anon Sire lwcawns, that worthy knyht,
vppon that hors fulsone he was,
and sory man & angry jn that plas,
that his schamefulnesse wolde avenge.

Sir Girflee, who has been assisting Lucans, gets new courage.
Lucans is remounted,
and full of vengeance.

thanne sone prekede he jnto that renge,
where as Gwycher he say, of scotland kyng,
that on Moret, his felawe, was abydyng.
Sire Lwcawns his hors there smot so sore,
and with Gwycher þe kyng mette he thore,
So that thorwhe hawberk and haberiown
Sone jnto the feld there smot hym down.

He rides against the king of Scotland,
Sir Moret's adversary,
and fells him.

thanne whanne Sire Moret beheld tho this,
Ful sone jn that Sadel he was, j-wys,
and forth he prekede jnto that pres,
and for non man ne wolde he ses.
thanne Belyas & Flawndryn say he there,
that vppon tweyne of his Felawes rested were,
vppon dryawnt and dynas,
that *with* Artheur weren jn that plas.
but so gret was there that pres *with*-jnne,
er sire Moret to his Felawes myhte wynne,
So that so sore there gan he fyhte,
that hit was merveyl to ony mannes syhte;
and so wel there he hym bar jn that fyht,

Sir Moret jumps into the saddle,
sees some friends struggling,
forces his way through the press,
and relieves them.

10961. *thorwh*, the *r*-mark added afterwards.

Digitized by Google

that his felawes he Rescwede anon Ryht.

King Arthur encounters one of the hostile kings.

And al this Mene whyle Artheur the kyng
vppon the tothyr side ful sore was bekeryng,
and anothir kyng þere hym ageyn,
So þat gret noyse gan Rysen, jn certeyn,

On both sides the people run to their assistance.

on partye to Reskwen þere kyng Artheur,
anothyr partye hym to werkyn Langowr.
So that anon bataylle began there ful strong
betwixen bothen partyes hem among,
but Evere bothe kynges on horsbak were.
but kyng Arthewr they myhten don no dere,

[leaf 130 b]

For Kyng Arthewr and His Meyne tho
to the partye thanne wrowhten ful wo;

Arthur rides to rescue Sir Girflee and Sir Kay,

and streyht to Rescwen he forth wente
Sire Gyrfles and Sire kay, veramente,
that with kyng Newtres & with Brangores,
with kyng Vryens & with kyng Ydiers
and Ek the Fyfthe kyng abygawnt also—
these fyve these knyhtes hadden don moch wo;

who have been beaten and unhorsed,

hem hadden they so beten and vnhorsed bothe,
that aschamed they weren & of here lyves lothe.

Sir Lucans being their only helper;

and these two knyhtes non oþer Socour hadden there
but Goode Syre Lwcawns the Botelere.
and there this sire Lwcawns so hym þer bar,
that there-offen wondrede kyng Arthewr thar,
and beheld the grete Nede that they weren jnne.
thanne for non thyng ne wolde he blynne,
but jnto that pres prekede as a wood lyown,

Arthur works destruction.

and on bothe sides dyde he Mochel distrocciown,
that non Man there dorste his strok abyde;
So sore fawht kyng Arthewr jn that tyde.
and on bothe his sydes he slowh down Ryht,
so hydous & angry was he in fyht.
and Ek Sire kay and Sire Gyrflez
with Arthewr sore fowhten they in that pres.

Antron, Ulfin, and Bretel fight

on the toþer syde syre Antron, Vlphyn, & sire Bretel
ajens dukes & kynges fowhten wondyrly wel,

10998. MS. Re*f*cwedē.
11014. *kyng Vryens*, MS. *kyng Newtris*.
11029. *on* added above the line.

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wyche weren dewk Escam and kyng Tradelyvand,
and azens chybret, kyng of Northhumberland,
and ek azens kyng karados also,
that a worthy werrour was holden tho.
and alle these azens kyng Artheur gonnen ryde,
and there sore fowhten they in that tyde.
For eche azens oþer so sore justed there,
that they to-borsten bothe Scheld & spere.
For ne hadde socour to kyng artheur sone þere be,
the wers hadde he had, ful certeynle.
For tho kynges and knyhtes on þe toþer side,
Ful worthy men they weren that tyde;
ek dowble they hadden azens kyng Artheur,
that vnnethe they myhten abyden that stowr.

against duke Escam and several kings.

These all turn on king Arthur.

Arthur is on the point of succumbing.

Thanne happede, kyng Ban and kyng Bors
that owt of þe forest comen with gret fors
jn releveng of kyng Arthewr there;
but þe tothyr partye of hem not war were.
Anon they gonnen hem askryen so Lowde,
that hit dynede jnto the clowde.
Ful fresch they comen owt of that forest
as worthy kynges, to fyhten ful prest.

Then (the first division of) Ban and Boors' army comes out of the forest with a mighty war-cry.

Thanne behelden al this these oþer barowns,
and wisten wel that non distrocciowns
myhte comen but thorwghe theke partye;
wherfore to cownseille they gonne hem hye,
and to-gederis assemblede jn a medewe þere,
al these Lordynges to-gederis Jn fere,
and tooken cownseyl what they myhten do.
thanne seide kyng Loth to hem ryht tho:
"j wot wel that ech of vs here fyhten muste,
but to on thyng ze mown wel troste:
that j my-self azens fowre oþer thre,
be my josteng ouercomen scholen be.
Forto avengen myn noysaunce
on hem j thenke to don veniaunce.
for mochel peple han we lost here,

The enemies, realizing the danger,

withdraw to a meadow,

and have a consultation.

King Loth says

that he, for his part, will avenge himself on three or four.

11043. *artheur* added above the line.—MS. *þ^e han be.*

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whiche that they scholen beyen ful dere." 11072

The King of a Hundred Knights praises him,

And whanne the kyng of an .c. knyhtes
herde kyng Loth thus Speken owtryhtes,
Gret preyseng to hym ȝaf he thanne,
as belonged to swich a worthy Manne, 11076

[leaf 139 c] and swears to do the same.

And Swor By His creawnce Anon Ryht
that the same wolde he don jn Fyht.

So do several others.

And kyng karados & kyng Newtres also
the same oth sworen they bothe two. 11080
And the dewk Escam of kambenye
the same oth there swor, Sekerlye,
and Ek kyng clarioun of Northhumberlond
the same oth swor, as j vndirstond. 11084

King Loth then says that six of them should go against the ambuscade,

"Now schal j seyen ȝow," quod kyng Loth thanne,
"what we scholen don now Every Manne.
sixe of owre feleschepe we scholen ordeygne
aȝens ȝone busschement, jn certeyne; 11088

and the other five remain,

and here scholen beleven othyr fyve
aȝens this Meyne to fyhten ful blyve.
for xi kynges here we now be
to fyhten aȝens al this Meyne. 11092

the former with over 10,000 men,

So that aȝens this busschement welen we go
with .x. thousend fyhtyng men and Mo,

the latter with 8000 men;

and viij thousend scholen we leven here
kyng Artheur to anoyen jn alle Manere. 11096
and toward þe forest welen we go;
tyl aȝens the Nyht lete vs don so.

that will be the better plan.

and oure purpos thanne bettere scholen we have
and therto owre Meyne moche bettere Save. 11100
For ȝif that we abyden here stylle,
they ben ful lyk to werkyn vs ylle."

All approve.

To this cownseyl of kyng loth þere anon
thussone concentyd they Everychon. 11104
thanne assembled to-gederis they were,
and here hol Meyne departed there.

Thus King Loth, with part of the forces,

So that kyng Loth took with hym
the kyng of an hundred knyhtes so grym, 11108
augwysseaus, & dewk Escam of kambenye,

11087. *of* twice, the former crossed out.— *ordeygne*, the last letters through correction.

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with xij thousend men jn here partye,
where-offen that vj wynges they hadde
and jn eche wynge ij thousend they ladde.
So that forth they reden an esy pas,
tyl that they comen jnto þe same plas
that kyng Loth þere ordeyned before,
for better conseyl myht not han ben thore.
thus the .vj. kyngges forth they wente,
and .v. abyden thanne there presente
Forto werren vppon Arthewr the kyng
hym forto anoyen with sore fyhttyng.

rides towards the forest;

the others remain.

Now of the .v. that leften behynde
j schal ȝow tellen, as cometh to mynde.
kyng Brangores & kyng Vryens,
kyng Newtres, kyng clariouns, men of defens,
whiche was kyng of Northhumberland,
and of north wales kyng Tradelyvaund,
alle these weren jn on compenye
with vij thousend men, certeynlye,
and drowh hem to-gederis jn busschement,
as this storye here reporteth, verament.
For lyk as goode bodyes as they were,
Ful manfully defendid hem there.
but ful gret harm and damage hit was
of the gret werre, was jn that plas
be-twene kyng Arthewr & kyng Lothis meyne.
that tyme began there ful strong melle,
whiche that durede, tyl evensong was don,
and many a man to deth there gan gon.

The five kinge who remain are Brangors, Uriens, Newtris, Clariouns, and the king of Northumberland.

They draw themselves together,

and defend themselves manfully

till after evensong.

vppon the tothyr partye entrede kyng Ban,
and kyng Bors kam with hym than,
With Leownces and Syre Faryens Also,
that the ferste Bataylle ladden tho.
So that they comen an ese pas,
tyl they weren alle ensemblyd jn that plas,
and ayens hem kam kyng ydyers,
as he was kyng ful stowt and fers.

Against those approaching from the forest (Fariens with the first division; [leaf 130 d] cf. p. 280)

goes first king Ydiers.

11145. *hem* corrected from *kom*; the *a* of *kam* corrected from *o*, for original *y* (thus originally: *ayens kom ky* . .).

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And whanne that to-gederis there they mette,
He fights well, Many sore strokes to-gederis they sette,
So that the noyse myhte wel han ben herd
a long half myle; so sore they Ferd.
Ful gret occisioun thanne there was
bothe of men and hors jn that plas.
but is eventually repulsed. but certeyn kyng Ydiers meyne
that storm miht not suffren jn non degre,
but fledden awey for discomfyture
Another king helps him. To kyng gwyseawns, j 3ow ensure,
whiche sone hem comforted sothfastly.
and a strong bataylle began pere, trewely,
They press hard on Sir Fariens; So that Sire Faryens and his meyne
at gret mischef weren, ful Sykyrle.
but Leonces (with the second division) comes to rescue, and whanne leownces of Paerne be-held al this,
Ful sone to reskews he rod, j-wys,
and so sore rod vpon that meyne,
that jn that place ne lefte he, Sykerle,
Non that dorste hym there abyde;
So socowred he Pharyens jn that tyde.
and throws them back on the duke of Cambeny. and thus drof he forth that compenye
Jnto the dewkis ost of kambenye.

The duke pushes forward, Whanne the dewk hem Sawh comen so,
thanne jn his herte he was ful wo,
and a3ens hem faste he gan to ryde
that hem so chasede jn that Tyde.
makes the fugitives return, and thanne they that flowen to-fore,
a3en with the dewk retorned thore,
and renews the combat. and there began ful strong Bataylle,
whan that eche partye gan other assaylle.
Now king Buors appears (with the third division), thanne thussone entrede kyng Bors there
with his hol meyne al jn fere,
and there so sore they meten jn same,
that betwene tho partyes was non game.
and king Ydiers exclaims: and whanne kyng ydyers kyng Bors beheld,
that So kam prekynge jn the feld,
thanne to his feleschepe there seide he anon:

11160. *at*, *t* on erasure. 11172. *hem*, *e* corrected from *y*.

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"God vs defende now everychon
this day from the peryl of ded
of hym that cometh here jn this sted!
For hym j knowe be his armure,
that he is knyht bothe good and sure.
For neuere his place he wyle forsake
For non dismembrure ne for non wrake.
and þerto he is so worthy a knyht,
jn al this world non bettere jn fyht.
for thowh al the world were hym ageyn,
but his owne brothyr hit were, jn certeyn,
of prowesse Js there non man
that jn bataylle dar abyden hym than."

"God defend us from him who comes here!
I know him by his armour.
In all the world there is no one better in fight."

Anon the kyng of an hundred knyhtes thanne
askede of kyng ydiers what was that manne.
thanne answerede kyng loth to hym ageyn,
& seide hit was kyng Bors of Gawnes, jn certein.
"but, certein, j ne wot how he here kam;
and behold, with hym he ledeth many a man!"
"what," quod the kyng of an hundred knyhtes tho,
"how jnto this contre scholde he comen so?"
"j not, so me god helpe!" quod kyng loth thanne,
"but this day behoveth now every manne
to preven hym-self a worthy knyht
ajens this kyng Bors here in fyht."
Anon Answerede Kyng Karados thanne:
"j not, this day ho þat kan preven hym a manne,
nethyr this day what we scholen do;
but j my-self ajens hym now wile j go.
and jif ony mester that j haue of Socour,
loke je not me Faylle for non langour."
therto they graunteden everychon;
he took his leve, and forth gan to gon.

The King of a Hundred Knights asks who he is.
King Loth answers:
"King Boors of Gawnes. I know not how he came here.
But now it behoves every man to prove himself a worthy knight."
[leaf 131 a]
King Karados says:
"I will go against him. If I need help, do not fail me."

thus kyng karados wente forth thanne
and with hym jn compenye many a manne;
an esy pas and sadly they wente,
til that kyng Bors they metten presente.
and whanne that so ny to-gederis they were,
of an archer a bowe drawht there,

He rides forth,
and meets king Boors.

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There is a fierce encounter.

bothe parties to-gederis mette so faste,
that ech on othyr here speres gonne breste,
so that on bothe partyes they fyllen a-down,
and of karados meyne gret occisiown.
thanne drowen they owt here swerdis blyve,
and manye a man there loste his lyve.

King Boors commands an old knight to bear his banner.

thanne kam kyng Bors to an old knyht,
whiche man that Blaaryus hyht,
and hym comanded his Baner to bere
(and this knyht dorste not refusen it there),
and bad hym gon forth hym be-fore,
that the Bretowns his armes myhten sen thore.

He takes a spear, rides into the press,

Thanne took he a Royde spere anon,
and jnto that pres he gan faste to gon,
and that Reng he to-barst ful sone,
and þere-jnne entrede amonges hem echone.

and pierces a knight.

and with a knyht he mette schortly there,
that thorwh armes and harneys he gan him bere.
So thorwh the body there he hym smot,
that down he fyl thanne, god hit wot,
and brak his Nekke jn his fallynge tho;
Swich destenye that knyht cam vnto.

Then he draws his sword.

thanne kyng Boors drowh owt his swerd,
and amonges that meyne þere so he ferd.
and whanne the peple Say hym faren so,

King Karados' men flee.

Ful faste to flyht thanne gonne they go.
thus kyng karados loste his meyne;
For kyng Bors they gonnen alle to fle.

The King of a Hundred Knights comes to succour.

that beheld the kyng of an hundred knyhtes;
to Socouren karados he kam ful Ryhtes
with ij thousend knyhtes jn compenye,
that bolde werriours weren and worthye.
and there fulsone to-gederis they mette,
and many harde strokes to-gederis smette.

Both Boors

For there to speken of king Bors prowesse,
how that he fawht there jn that presse!
Also ek on the tothir kynges syde

11226. *of*, *o* corrected from *k*.

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they fowhten ful strongly that ylke tyde,
bothe kyng karados and the tothyr kyng,
that of an hundred knyhtes hath gouernyng.
[for] so strong was the Bataylle thanne,
that at mischef there was many a manne.

and his adversaries fight bravely.

Thanne kyng Ban of Baynoyk entrede anon,
and with his meyne he entrede ful son,
and there his steward his armes bar
with a crowne of gold and azure thar
with two bendis travers, ȝelw & grene;
As ony flowr oþer herbe there was hit sene.
and of this Sixe knyhtes jn swte hadde he,
bothe hors and man al jn on degre;
Bothe trappures and Testerys, Al that þer Was,
so was arrayed there jn that plas.
and whanne these kynges syen this syht,
wondirly they weren ful sore a-fryht,
and seiden they mosten forsaken here place,
For they knewen there non othir grace.
thanne to hem assembled kyng Loth,
Ful sore wepyng there, wel j wot,
and seide there to his compenye:
"Now wot j wel, ful Sekerlye,
alle is lost that we hauen jdo."
So bothe partyes thanne metten they tho;
So sere here lawnces they borsten on sondyr,
that al the erthe qwaked hem vndyr;
and out of helmes þe fer owt flew,
that many a man hit Sawh on rew;
and with the strokis þat weren hem betwynne,
alle that forest hit denede with-jnne,
that half a myle men myhten hit here,
ho that jn that feld tho were.
whanne that kyng Ban ful sembled was
ajens the tothere jn that plas,
there nolde but fewe there thanne abyde.
Anon vppon þe fyve kynges gan he ryde

King Ban arrives (with the fourth division), his steward carrying his gorgeous banner, and six knights, in the same colours, [leaf 131 b] attending it.

Then the hostile kings are greatly discouraged;

even king Loth says that all is lost.

Yet there is violent encounter,

making the forest resound.

Many flee.

11263. The first word is illegible, the paper being damaged.

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and ek vppon here hole meyne;
King Ban kills his foes, For þere made kyng Ban gret mortalyte.
For anon as they kyng Ban aspyde,
Ful faste they fledden that jlke tyde
For the grete occision
that kyng Ban made abowtes hym jn virown;
and gret martyrdom he made also,
and breaks their ranks both right and left. and thus jn eche reng þere gan he go,
bothe on lefte syde and ek on þe ryhte;
he kyd hym there as kyng and knyhte.
So that j-dowted he was ful sore
of alle his enemyes þat weren thore.

King Loth and the King of a Hundred Knights, Thanne forth cometh kyng Loth tho
and the kyng of an hundred knyhtes also,
and Sire margamur here thridde felawe was,
with here Bataylles jn that plas.
For thussone the bataylles j-medlyd were
on with-jnne anoþer ryht sone there.
seeing, with anger and grief, damage done by king Ban, and whanne that they behelden kyng Ban,
that so gret damage dyde there than,
kyng Loth there-with was angry tho,
and ek the tothyr kyng was ful wo.
with here spores smeten they here hors thanne,
ride against him. and bothe they reden ayens kyng Banne,
for kyng Loth was a worthy knyht,
and that he kydde there in his fyht.
King Loth cuts off a piece of king Ban's shield. For with his spere he smot so kyng Ban,
that a cantel of his scheld jnto þe feld flew than.
and whanne that kyng Ban felte thys,
Fulsore he was amevyd there, j-wys.
King Ban smites the King of a Hundred Knights on the helm; Anon his goode swerd he lefte on hy,
as a man that was bothe wroth and angry,
and to the kyng of an hundred knyhtes he rod,
and hym so smot, there that he stod,
the glancing stroke hits the horse. vppon the helm; but hit glawcede adown
There vppon his horsis arsown,
that Trapped was jn erne & stel.
but yit that Strok hyt bot ful wel,
For the hors chine asondir there he smot,

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that bothe to grownde wenten fot hot.
And whanne this kyng of an .c. knyhtes
Felte hym so feld there jn fyhtes
And therto His Hors Vndyr Hym so Ded,
thanne was he ryht of Sory red.
Vpe sone he rekouerede forto stond,
and his swerd took jn his hond,
and leyde his Scheld vppon his hed,
For fulsore he dowtede of ded.

Whanne that kyng Brangores beheld al this,
that þe kyng of an hundred knyhtes, j-wys,
was thus feld and leyd on grownde,
anon to kyng ban he rod that stownde,
and smot hym evene a-myddes the scheld,
there as he hovede jn the Feld.
and kyng Ban Sone there tornede ageyn,
and vppon the helm he rawht hym, ful pleyn,
that his coyphe of yrne and Sercle also
evene asondyr smot he tho,
that to the grownde he fyl down ryht,
For lengere to sytten hadde he non myht.

Aftyr, whanne these kynges rekouered were,
ajens kyng ban Sore Fowhten they there.
but he dede hem mochel more grevaunce,
thanne they hym deden, with-owten dowtaunce.
For jit nas there non of the kynges two
but that mochel of here blood hadden lost tho.
what be here hurtes & woundes bothe
Ful feynt to fyhten they were forsothe.
but jit mochel harm there was j-do
betwixen thike thre kynges tho.
and whanne the bataylle entre-mellid were,
asondyr sone weren they departyd there,
whethyr that eyther partye wolde oþer non;
but jit amonges hem moche harm was don.

Thanne hyt happede that ylke tyde,
that kyng Artheur jnto that pres cam ryde,

11336 Horse and rider fall;

[leaf 131 c]

11340 but the king soon gets up again.

11344

King Brangors, noticing his plight,

11348 smites king Ban on the shield;

king Ban returns the

11352 stroke,

and fells his foe.

11356

In the ensuing fight,

king Ban keeps the

11360 upper hand against his wounded enemies;

11364 much harm is done to them.

11368

King Arthur, coming

11372 thither.

11336. *bothe* crossed out before *fot*. 11344. MS. *dowteded*.

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finds king Ban fighting on foot,

and fond kyng Ban fyhtyng on fote,
wherfore he was ful wo, god wote.
but Evere he fawht So sore there,
that non Man ne dorste comen hym nere,
and so forth wente thorwh the pres
vigerously fyhtyng, with-owten les.

yet keeping all at bay.

but there wolde non Man his strokes abyde,
So Merveyllous they weren jn that tyde.
thanne Entrede kyng Artheur on þe to[thyr] partye
thorwh al the pres ful Manfullye

With his blood-soiled sword,

with his swerd on honde, that Soyled hit was
with hors blood & Mennes jn that plas.
For Manye Merveylles wrowhte kyng Arthewr,
For jn armes he was bothe Styf & stowr.
but whanne he Say kyng Ban at sweche myschef,
hym thowhte hit was to hym gret Repref.

Arthur rides against a knight,

Anon kyn[g] Arthewr aspyde a knyht,
that Ryaly was arayed forto fyht.
with his swerd to hym kyng Arthewr Rod,
and non lengere there he abod,

cleaves his head,

but with his swerd smot hym so sore,
that jnto the teth he clef his hed thore,
that ded to the grounde he fyl anon.

and takes his horse to king Ban.

And kyng Arthewr be þe Reyne his hors took son,
and to kyng Ban he ledde hyt ful faste.
"My leve frend," he seide, "worth vp jn haste,
For amonges 3oure Enemyes 3e han j-be;
this place to forsaken sone scholen 3e hem se."

Joyfully the two turn on their enemies,

[leaf 131 d]

Whanne that kyng Ban Recouered was
Be helpe of kyng Arthewr jn that plas,
Gret Joye Bothe to-gederys they Made,
and amonges here Enemyes they prekeden ful glade.
Anon as they on the tothyr partye
kyng Artheur and king Ban dyden aspye,

who are discomfited,

anon so discomfyt weren they tho
of the harm þat these two kynges hadden j-do,
that they hadden j-lost clene here talent

11379. *th^e*, the abbreviation mark in darker ink.
11381. MS. *þ^e to ȝtye*. 11389. MS. *kyn*.

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to fyhten or ony dede don, verament,
but Towardis the wode they wente ful fáste.
And ER they myhten hit keueren atte laste,
Mochel occisiown was don there
be-twixen the wode and the Revere
there here Stale they Rested & kepte.
Anon here Meyne there to hem lepte,
and jn peryl of deth Echon,
For vnnethis to hem askaped ony on.
Whanne kyng Newtris and kyng loth tho
and the kyng of an hundred knyhtes also,
also kyng karados & kyng ydyors,
Ek kyng Vryens & kyng Brangors,
that tho was kyng of Northhumberlond,
To on partye they drowen, j vndirstond,
Thanne seyde Maganors to hem anon :
" with 3oure Meyne j Rede that 3e hens gon
For al hit is j-torned to scomfyture
and to distroccion, j 3ow Ensure."

and flee towards the forest.
Many are killed between river and forest.
The hostile kings,
drawing together at one point,
are advised to depart.

Thus hem Enchasede kyng Artheur tho,
kyng Ban and kyng Bors also,
tyl that they comen to on Rever,
that ful wondyrly depe was there;
where as þe fugytyves a brygge diden Make
there for to passe ouer that lake.
So that they pasten ouer Echon,
and these thre kynges aftyr gonne gon.
thanne Merlyn Seyde to kyng Artheur tho :
" Sey me now, what thynkest þou to do?
thyn Enemyes hast thou ouercomen Echon,
therfore jn-to thin owne contre thou gon,
and with the thy frendes thou lede,
be whom þat þou hast had Ryht good spede,
and hem do thou worschepe and honour,
For they han holpen the jn Many a stour.
For jn-to the Forest moste me go
there with my frend Blasye to speken also."

King Arthur pursues the fugitives,
who make a bridge
and cross the river.
Then Merlin advises Arthur to return to his own country
and do honour to his helpers.
Merlin himself must go to Blasy.

11432. *wondyrly*, *l* through correction.
11436. *thęse* twice, the former crossed out.

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Thus Arthur and Merlin depart.

thanne departyd kyng Artheur thens anon,
and Merlyn jnto the forest js he gon
To speken with Blasye, that hym bod there,
that of Many thinges dide hym Enqwere.

Merlin tells Blasy of his intercourse with Arthur,

and Merlyne seide he hadde j-be
to conseillen kyng Artheur, Sykerle.
"that is wel don," quod Blasye thanne,
"hym to counseillen as a wis manne."
than tolde Merlyne to blasye anon

and of all that has happened.

of al tho thinges that hadden be don,
and hou kyng Arthewr jnto lytel breteyne sente
there socoure to haven, veramente.
Sethen he tolde hym Ek also
of the grete Bataylle þat was j-do,
and of the scomfyture of the xj kynges.

Blasy writes it in his books.

So that this Blasye wrot alle these thinges,
and jnto his Book þere wrot he Euery thing,
Be whom now þerof haven we knowleching.

[leaf 132 a]

[B]ut of Al this Bataylle Leven We now talkyng,
[an]d let vs Speken of anothyr thyng,
[Ne]thir of Blasie ne of Merlyne at this tyde

Now let us return to king Arthur.

[No] More to speken, but let vs forth glyde,
[an]d to kyng Arthewr & to the tweyne kynges also
[tha]t jn his compenye gonnen forth to go,
[and] ek of other baronage jn compenye,
[tha]t with kyng Arthewr weren, Sekerlye.

Chap. XI.

[N]ow here putteth this Jlke Storye

After the defeat of the eleven kings,

[of t]hese xj kynges Jn Memorye,
[and o]f the dewk of Askam also,
[tha]t be Merlynes cownseylle conqwered weren tho,
[an]d how joyful from Blasye he cam,
[an]d how that kyng Arthewr ordeyned hym than.

tents are pitched,

[th]anne here Pavylouns pyhten they ful faste
[an]d Ek here tentes jn Ryht gret haste.

11457. *fente* above crossed-out *wente*.
11465–90. The beginning of each of these lines is destroyed through the leaves having stuck together. Traces, partly quite distinct, are to be found on the other leaf.
11475. *Iwcawn* crossed out before *Aſkam*.

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[So] that they casten hem there to abyde
[an]d Forto Resten hem that jlke tyde.
[th]anne Gouernours of þe ost gonne they ordeynen there : watchmen are appointed,
[S]ire Leownce, Sire Gyrflet, & Sire Lwcawns the botelere.
[th]anne Sire Faryens to sire Leownces j-joyned he was
[Towar]dis the wode to kepen jn that plas ;
[and Si]re Lwcawns and sire Gyrflet
[kepte]n the Medewes bothe drye and wet.
[and] the Remnaunt to Reste gonnen to gon, and the others refresh and rest themselves.
ly[k a]s þerto they hadden Nede Everychon.
So that they Eten & dronken, & Maden here play,
and there hem Resteele, tyl hit was day.
For j-nowh they hadden of the Beste,
bothe Riche and powre, to gladen his geste.
Thus they hem Restede, tyl hit was day ; Next morning, king
And thanne kyng Arthewr comanded, jn fay, Arthur had the spoil brought together ;
that al the good that geten was
and Ek al the Rychesse Jnto on plas
that to-gederis scholde ben browht, ful pleyn,
For he wolde departyn hit þere, jn certeyn.
and whanne that they hadden herd here Masse, after mass, it is distributed amongst the whole army.
they wenten there as al þe trosor wasse.
and there on hepis as that hit lay,
These thre kynges, with-owten delay,
departyd this good þere to Every Man,
as that hem thowhte he hadde nede than : according to need and merit.
on Man lasse and a-nothyr More,
as hem thowhte they weren worthy thore,
and ek to many pore knyhtes also,
Ek to seriauntes that with hem weren tho ;
they 3ouen hem of þat good ful largely,
Whyles that Hem Last there ony peny. [leaf 133 b]
and sethen departyd they forth in here compenye Money, horses, and precious clothes are all given away.
bothe stedys and palfreyes ful justlye,
clothes of Gold & of Sylk also,
that nowht to departyn beleft hem tho.
So that Every Man gwerdonen he was
that with hem was jn that plas.
thanne xl knyhtes chosen they tho (Misunderstanding

11497. *geten* corrected from *gesten*.

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of the context: see Note.)

with hem of Tarmelyde forto go,
which meyne Sire Leownce & sire pharyen
jn governaunce hadden & with hem sire Gracien.
Thus this peple of Tarmelyde
jnto here lond they gonne hem gyde,
that kyng clawdas non harm scholde pere do,
whyles the two kynges here lond weren fro.

The men, on arriving in their own countries, buy property with the money.

Thanne these Barowns to-fore seid here,
Jn here owne contres whanne they were,
hem purchased bothe londes and fe,
Everych a man aftyr his degre,
with the grete ziftes that they hadde,
and with pe tresor pat they out of pe oost ladde,
So that evere riche men they were,
whiles that on erthe they lyvede here.

The three kings remain at Bredigam,

So soiorned kyng Artheur at Bredygam stylle
and with hym bothe kynges at his wylle
(that was jn the march of gret Breteyne
and ek of Tarmelyde tho, in certeyne)

waiting for Merlin.

Merlyne forto abyden there;
this was Artheuris entent, j sey zow here.
and vppon the morwen, whanne this was do,
that kyng Arthewr his meyne hadde departyd so,
and at Bredygam hadde mad gret feste
as wel to pe meste as to the leste,

Going out in the morning,

and whanne they hadden eten echon,
out of here loggenges gonnen they gon
Forto beholden bothe ryvere and mede,
How pat the flowres dyden springen & sprede,
thanne behelden they furthermore:

they see an old man coming over the meadows,

they Syen where a old cherl cam thore
ouer alle the medewes, the sothe to sayn,
with his bowe on hande, jn certayn.
and boltes vndir his gyrdel bar he,

with wild birds hanging from his girdle,

and wylde fowl hadde slayn, sekerle,
the whiche vndir his gyrdel him heng abowte.
zit anothir bryd aspide he, with-owten dowte;

11552. *On*, *o* corrected from *j*.
11553. *Gyrdel*, *d* through correction.

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anon his bowe to his ere he drowh,
and anon ryht there that bryd he slowh.
ȝit wylde mathelardes he slowh also,
and evere vnder his Gyrdyl he dyde hem do.
Forth a gret pas thanne cam he there
jnto place þere as þe thre kynges logged were.
tha[nne] these kynges hadden beholden ful wel
the schetyng of this cherl every del.
So towardis here loggeng cam he faste,
tyl that thyder he was comen atte laste.
thanne King Arthewr axede hym ful snelle
ȝif ony of that wylde fowl wolde he selle.
"ȝe," quod the cherl, "with good wylle anon
j wele hem Sellen everychon."
"To what prys?" quod Arthewr the kyng.
and thanne the cherl wolde seyn non thing.
the aray of this cherl j schal declare,
and so wel as þat j hadde ben thare:
Whit russet hosen he hadde vppon
with a peyre of grete clowted schon,
With a cote and Surcote of Blak Burnet
vppon his Body ful lewedly j-set,
and j-gyrt he was with a schepis skyn,
and þerto he was bothen long, stowt, and Grym,
therto on his hed nethyr coyfe ne hood,
but thus al barehed the carl forth ȝood.
For lyk a wodman he semed, oþer a felown
that hadde don som distrocciown.
and to kyng Arthewr he seyde thanne:
"j ne can non skele of sweche maner menne
That Loven so wel here Tresore;
hyt js ryht nowht, j telle the fore."
"but thou ony Servyse cowdest do,
to avauncen the scholde j wherto?"
quod this carl: "haue thou this fowl thanne.
ȝit for me art þou than the rychere manne,
and thou of thy good ȝevest me non thyng,
not the lest part of on ferthing.

and shooting more game as he passes along.

The man comes quickly up to the kings.

Arthur asks him if he will sell the birds.

The man says yes.

The king wants to know the price; but the man is silent.

He is dressed poorly,

[leaf 132 c]

is tall, stout, and grim-looking.

He hints at the king being stingy.

The king retorts.

The man says: "Have these birds, thou, the richer man, who givest nothing.

11562. *thre*, *r* corrected from *e*. 11563. The paper is damaged.
11574. *þ* corrected from *as*.

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Yet giving would do thee credit."

and forto ȝeven of þat thou hast geten here,
me thinketh for thy worschepe gretly it were." 11596

The kings look at each other in surprise.

Whanne that the kyng Arthewr vndirstod this,
eche kyng on othyr thanne lokyd, j-wys,
and sethen they seiden hem be-twene:
"where-of devel spekyth this carl so kene?" 11600

Ban asks him what he means.

thanne þere anon hym clepede kyng Ban,
and axede what devel he seyde than.

He answers not, but says to Arthur:

but this carl to hym non word wolde speke,
but to king Arthewr he gan for to reke. 11604

"Take these birds; for I will depart."

"haue þou," he seide, "these Bryddes here,
For j wele walken jn myn manere."

Ban asks him who he is.

thanne Spak kyng Ban, certeinle:
"Sey what maner man that thou be." 11608

He replies: "Such a man am I, that Merlin has told me

"Swich a man am here j," quod he,
"that a savage man thus tolde me,
whiche that merlyne is his name,
jn this lond a man of ryht gret fame— 11612
and that same merlyne tolde to me
that hider wolde he comen, ful sykerle,
Forto speken with ȝow kynges present;
thus merlyne me tolde, verament." 11616

he will come here and speak with you kings."

Ulfin, coming out, overhears the conversation.

and jn the tyme of this talkyng
cometh Vlphyn owt of a chambre goyng,
and herde the pletyng of hem two,
hou kyng Ban to merlyn spak tho. 11620

Ban is incredulous.

"O," quod kyng Ban, "hou may this be,
that merlyne scholde speken with the?"

The man says he may believe it, or do the other thing.

"what," quod the carl, "ȝif þou wylt me leve,
chese; the oþer ellis thou beleve." 11624

Ulfin smiles, knowing that it is Merlin.

And [whiles] the veleyn hadde seyd al this,
evere stood sire Vlphyn and herkened, j-wys,
and thussone he gan for to Smyle,
and knew hit was merlyne be his wyle. 11628

Merlin asks him to take more birds to his stingy king.

whanne that merlyne aspyde him so,
towardis hym he gan forto go.
"haue here mo Bryddis to thy kyng,
that grocheth forto ȝeven onything." 11632

11625. MS. *And the.*

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Thanne lowh Vlphyn wonderly sore
of the wordis that Merlyne seide thore,
and seide: "sire, ȝif hyt thy wylle be,
wylt þou jnto chambre gon with me
For diuers thinges that j haue to seyn
betwene the and me þere, jn certeyn."
"ȝe, sire, gladly," quod this veleyn tho,
"with the to chambre now wyl j go."
Thanne beheld the kyng sire vlphyn,
and axede to what ende oþer fyn
That so Faste He Lowh there,
and why that his Skele were.
"Sire," he seide, "jn tyme comeng
ȝe scholen hit knowen Every thing."
there mette the veleyn with Sire kay,
and thus to him he gan to Say:
"Go make Redy this wylde fowl here,
that hit be at thy lordis Sopere."
"ȝe, sire," quod Vlphyn to that veleyn,
"hit nys not the ferste, jn certeyn."
and with this cam þere sire Bretel,
and herde these wordis Everydel.
So whanne they hadde ben there a stownde,
thanne wyste Bretel he hadde Merlyn fownde,
and vndyr his Mentyl he lawhed anon.
thanne axede of hym the kyng thusson:
"Why dost þou lawhen here so sore?"
"Sire, and þe carl wyle, j schal tellen ȝow fore."
thanne this veleyn there lowh ful faste,
and seide to Vlphyn atte laste:
"Sey now on what js thy wylle."
than Vlphyn seide the kyng vntylle:
"Sire," he seyde, "knowe ȝe not Merlyn,
whiche that is ȝoure owne devyn?"
"ȝis," quod the kyng, "why axen ȝe?
hym j wel knowe, and j him se."
"Sire," quod vlphyn, "this js now he

Ulfin laughs,
and asks for a private talk.
The man consents.
Arthur asks Ulfin why he laughs.
[leaf 132 *d*]
Ulfin answers he shall know by and by.
Now Sir Kay comes;
the man asks him to prepare the birds.
Bretel also arrives,
recognizes Merlin, and laughs in his sleeve.
The king again asks why he laughs.
Merlin laughingly says to Ulfin that he may tell.
Ulfin says: "Do you not know Merlin?"
Arthur replies: "Of course, if I see him."
Ulfin says:

11633. *Vlphyn*, MS. þ^e *kyng* corrected from *m^elyne*.
11640. *to* above the line.
11656. *thãne*, *ne* through correction.

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"Why, this is he?"

that here toforn 3ow now 3e se,
that ij or thries 3ow hath serued thus.
why not 3e hym knowe, j merveylle, be jesus." 11672

The king wonders greatly,

Whan that the kyng herde vlphyn spekyn so,
wondirly abasched sore was he tho,
that he Nyste what forto seyn.
thanne seid Vlphyn to hym ageyn: 11676
"that j haue seyn oftere thanne one,
the bettere j schal knowen hyt Eft sone."

and still asks who the man is.

that seide the kyng to hym ageyn:
"Sey me now, what js this veleyn?" 11680

Ulfin says again: "Do you not know Merlin?

"Sire, knowe 3e not Merlin, and 3e hym se?"
"3is, what scholde Ellis now Eylen Me?"
"thanne beholde 3e this good Man so hore,
3if Euere 3e syen hym owht here before." 11684
and the kyng beheld him ful wel,
but he hym knew neuere a del.
"Now certes," quod sire vlphyn with that,

He will think his service badly applied."

"he may thinken his Servise Evel beset, 11688
that 3ow so mochel servyse hath j-do
an 3ow j-loved so wel therto
and 3ow hath holpen jn alle Manere
a3ens 3oure Enemyes, where so they were." 11692

Arthur crosses himself,

thanne whanne kyng Arthewr herde this,
fulsone thanne he hym blessede, j-wys,

and the other kings also marvel.

and the tothyre tweyne kynge[s] also
ful Mochel Merveylle hadden tho, 11696
and seiden: "Merlyn, how is this be-tyd
Now to ben clothed jn swich an abyt?"
thanne seide Merlyn to hem ageyn:
"hit May ful wel ben, in certeyn." 11700

Ulfin says that Merlin will show his true semblance.

thanne seide Vlphyn: "Sire, basche 3ow not,
for his semblawnce he wil schewen, wel j wot,
that 3e to-fore hauen hym jnne seyn;
he wile hit 3ow schewen, jn certeyn." 11704

The kings are pleased to hear it.

"that wolde we fayn," quod these kynges,
"To bringen vs owt of distorbelynges."

11675. *what*, *h* corrected from *a*.
11688. *may*, *a* through correction. 11695. Cf. l. 9095.
11703. *seyn*, *n* in darker ink.

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"Now jnto A chambre go ȝe Wyth Me." [leaf 133 *a*]
and so they dælen, these kynges thre. 11708 Ulfin takes them into a chamber,
thanne seyde sire Vlphyn to Artheur the kyng: and says:
"Sire, haueth ȝe non Merveylle of this thyng, "Wonder not!
For Many semblances he kan ȝow schewe, He can show you six or
vj other vij sone vppon a rewe. 11712 seven different shapes
For also often as hit js his plesaunce,
he wyl sone chongen his semblaunce,
and al be craft of Negremaunćye; by means of
Sire kyng, this is soth, ful certeynlye. 11716 necromancy,
and Gwymebant the clerk witnesseth this, as testified by
For of clergye he can ful Mochel, j-wys. Guinebant.
For often here-aftyr ȝe scholen hym se
jn dyvers semblaunce, ful feythfulle. 11720
For he doth wel that he do so, He does well
For in this contre he hath Many a fo. in disguising himself,
Now go we jnto the chambre ageyn, for he has many foes.
and þere scholen ȝe hym sen, jn certeyn, 11724 Now let us return,
jn the same semblaunce he was to-fore; and you shall see him in his
there scholen ȝe sen hym thore." old shape."

Whanne that to þe chomber ward þey wenten ageyn, They find
jn the halle Merlyn they fownden, ful pleyn, 11728 Merlin in the hall,
as he was jn his ferste kynde,
where-offen they Merveillede jn here Mynde. marvel,
they gonne Embracen hym anon, embrace him joyfully,
and gret joye they Maden Echon, 11732
as Men that hym lovede with al here herte;
Eche Man there to him gan sterte.
thanne gonnen they lawhen Everychon and laugh at
of that cowntenaunce that he haldе j-don, 11736 his disguise and his words
and of that he seide to the kyng; to the king.
Eche man tho took hyt in boordyng.
thanne seyde kyng Arthewr to Merlyn: Arthur says to him:
"Sire, now j knowe Ryht wel and fyn 11740 "Now I know that you
that ȝe me loven now, certeynle, love me.
and that these bryddys ȝe han ȝoven to Me. You have given me the birds,
and for ȝoure love j schal hem Ete, and I will eat
and for non thing j nele hyt lete." 11744 them for your sake."
thanne Merlyn gan to lawhen tho, Merlin laughingly replies:
and seide: "Sire, hyt js Ryht wel j-do." "Well done, sir!"

11746. *ſeide* added above the line.

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Arthur stays at Bredigain till Mid-Lent.

Thus they soiourned there Everychon,
tyl that Mydlentone was al a-gon.
So that kyng Arthewr vppon a day
be Merlynes leve, the Sothe to Say,

He makes the acquaintance of a fair maiden called Lysanore;

he aqweynted hym with a Mayden so ȝyng;
hym thowhte he sey neuere a fayrere thyng.
hire Name Lysanore y-clepyd hit was,
therles dowhter Sevayn, that deyde be kas.

she and many barons have come thither to pay homage to the victor,

that Mayden homage cam forto do
and with hyre Barowns Manye Mo
anon aftyr the Scomfyture
of the xj kynges, j ȝow Ensure.
thus for drede they comen to hym tho

In order that they may keep their lands.

here londes to holden with-owten wo.
For his bettere neuere j-seyn was;
that thus for here londys they sowhten here gras.
So that jt happede that this Mayde,
of whiche to-forn tyme j ȝow seyde,
cam to the castel of Bredyngham,

Lysanore lodges with a rich burge-s.

where that sche osteyed hyre than
wit[h] a Riche Burgeys, as j Rehers,
that was bothe Riche, stowt, and fers.

The king desires her,

and anon as the kyng hadde cast his Eye
vppon that Mayden, the sothe to seye,

[leaf 133 *b*]

Thanne With Merlyne Spak He Anon,
that they to-gederis Myhte speken alon.

sleeps with her, and begets Loost,

So be that Mayde that nyht the kyng lay,
and on hire be-gat, the Sothe to say,
On hyhte Loost, as good a knyht
as Euere armure scholde beren jn fyht,
which that was after, with-owten fable,

one of the knights of the Round Table.

On of the knyhtes of the Rownde table.
This Loost dyde Many a merveyllous thyng,
as here-aftyr hit schal come to Rehersyng.

After Mid-Lent, the three kings leave for Tarmelid.

whanne that Mydlentone was fully gon,
kyng Arthewr of this damysele took leve anon.
that so bothe kynges and Ek he
jn-to Tarmelyde wenten, certeynle.

11749. *vpp* crossed out before *Arthewr*.
11752. *he*, *e* corr. from *a*. 11767. MS. *wit*.

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Now of hem Resteth this Talkyng,
and lete vs speken of a-nothyr thyng,
and to the xj kynges Retornen ageyn,
whyder that they weren chased, jn certeyn.

Now the narrative turns to the defeated kings.

Now begynneth this Tale and telleth here
of the xj kynges that conqwered were,
how that they Reden al that Nyht
Sorewenge & wepyng, j 3ow plyht,
For here grete los and here damage;
thus Ryden they Soreweng, bothe knyht & page;
Nethyr of al Nyht Rested of Rydyng,
which was to hem alle an hevy thyng.
For nethir drynk ne Mete was hem among,
Nethyr of al day whiles þe bataylle was strong,
so þat day & thike nyht they weren Meteles,
and therto gret passing cold, with-owten les,
therto strong frost and Ys there was;
So weren they Evel Esed in Eche a plas.
thanne Ryden they forth to a Cyte
ful hungry & ful cold, as j telle the,
whiche cyte Sorhant it hyhte,
of kyng vryens, that was jn fyhte.
So there they weren Resceyved alle
and wel j-Esed, as tho myhte befalle.
For there-offen they hadden ful gret Mester,
For Many man was hurt and wondyd ther.
and Manye there deyden for Noysaunce,
For at thike tyme swiche was here chaunce.

Chap. XII.

The defeated kings ride all night,

sorrowing and weeping,

thirsty, hungry,

and cold.

They arrive in a city

called Sorhant,

and are well received.

Many die from their wounds.

And Skars thre dayes there hadde they be,
that hem comen tydynges, ful sykerle,
owt of cornewaylle & orkanye
of gret distrocciou̇n & of þe felonye
that to here londes þere weren j-do,
and toforn þe castel of Vandeberis Sege leyd also,
And therto the peple is Fled A-Way,
that neuere to-fore Remevede, j dar wel say.

News arrives of an invasion of their lands and besieging of one of their castles.

[leaf 133 *c*]

11813. *dayes*, *f* added afterwards.—*they*, MS. *he*.

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and whanne these Barowns herden of this,
The kings tremble — alle here flesch gonnen to tremble, j-wys,
For that so sodeyn an aventure
To hem scholde comen jn that langure. 11824
thanne wisten they, with-owten dowte,
that they weren distroyed al abowte,
and weep. — and Gonnen thanne to wepen ryht sore,
alle the peple that was thore. 11828

So thanne hit happede vppon a day
King Brangors sends for the others. — that kyng Brangores this myschef say.
So that he sente messengeris faste
To alle the kynges ostes jn haste, 11832
and that to hym they scholde comen anon
jn alle the haste that myhte be don.
They assemble in king Uriens' hall. — So that thyder assembled many men
jnto the halle of kyng vryen. 11836
After listening to King Uriens, they move off, red-eyed — and aftyr that they hadden herd þis kyng speke,
alle jnto on partye they gonnen forto reke
with eyen rede and al for-wept,
that longe waked hadden & lytel slept. 11840
and silent. — and amonges hem spoken they word non,
but stodyn ful stylle there everychon.
King Clariouns — and whanne that kyng claryowns say this,
that there non man wolde Speken, j-wys, 11844
anon vppon his fet he was there stondyng,
wants to know why Brangors has sent for him. — and seide openly to Brangore the kyng:
"Syre, hyder am j comen now to the
to weten what thow wylt Seyn to me. 11848
Now telle me, Sire, what js thy wylle,
& to my power j schal hit fulfylle."
Brangors replies: "I will tell you. — thanne seide sone kyng Brangores ageyn:
"j schal 3ow schewen, sire, jn wordis pleyn 11852
the cause why that j for 3ow sente;
j schal 3ow tellen, Sire, veramente.
Lordynges, hit is not to 3ow vnknowe
King Augwis' kinsmen have invaded our lands. — that the kynrede of kyng Augwys this throwe 11856
jnto oure londes entred they ben,

11850. *power*, *p* corrected from *w*.

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and there don they bothe brennen & slen.
Ek to to the castel vandeleris jn cornwaylle
they han leyd sege there, with-owten faylle.
and therfore cownseyl we mosten take
From that Sege to gon hem Make,
Ek hem forto dryven owt of kontre,
other Elles alle distroye[d] we be,
and alle oure Eyres j-put to Nowht,
that jnto this world we han forth browht."

"3e, Sire, wyle 3e vndirstonden now me:
a3ens kyng Artheur we han now j-be
and non thing Encresyd jn his Lond;
this owten 3e wel forto vndyrstond.
Nethyr, Syre, vppon the tothyr syde
of the Londes of Tarmelyde,
that Somtyme oure socour wolde han be,
but power hauen they non now, Sykerle,
but the kyng Ryowns, that js Myhty
and therto Ryche & of Body worthy,
and this two 3er dede he non werre.
Nethyr anothyr kyng, that js nerre:
kyng Pales of lystenois he hyht;
also he is a worthy knyht,
but that he kepeth his Brothir, trewelye,
kyng Pelynore, that lyth in Maladye,
of whiche he schal neuere Recouered be,
Tyl on þyng be don, Sire, ful certeynle:
Tyl that seynt Graal to ende Be Browht;
take this forsothe, 3if 3e welen owht.
Also kyng Aleyn, that Syk lyth also,
non Nekewr jnto þat tyme may be do,
and tyl that a bettere knyht of Breteyne
Jnto this lond be comen, certeyne."
(anon axede of hym kyng Brangor
what Maner of thyng the Graal was thore.)
"Nether of Norga, of Sornoleys the kyng,
Mowen 3e hauen there non Sucoureng,

We must see how we can drive them away.

In king Arthur's land we have gained nothing.

And no help can be expected from Tarmelid;

nor from king Pales,

who tends his sick brother;

[leaf 133 d]

nor from king Alein, who is likewise sick;

nor from king Norga,

11864. MS. *diſtroye*. 11884. þyng added in the left margin.

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who defends himself against the Giants;

For vppon the jeawntes werre halt he,
that Moche Noysaunce hym don, Sykerle.
For the jeantes wolden held his lond
al of hem, as j now vndirstond,
and he defendyth hym as a Man,
as long as that he May & kan.

nor from Perdenian,

Nethyr of Perdenyan the kyng
mowen ȝe hauen non helpyng,

Amadonan,

Nethyr of the kyng Amadonan,

and Clamades, who war upon king Galaost.

nethir of kyng clamades, j telle ȝou kan;
For they werren vppon kyng Galaost,
the wheche is cosyn, wel thou wost,
To the kyng of an hundred knyhtes;
and aȝens hym they kepen here fyhtes."

And if Galaost conquers,

"But assone as kyng Galaost
hath conqweryd the tothyr ost
the wheche he halt werre ageyn,
thanne wot j ful wel, jn certeyn,

he will want Uter Pendragon's land.

that non thing so sore doth he crave
as þat was vterpendragons Lond to have.
So that other cownseyl geten ȝe non of Me
but that grete God oure conseil be.

Now let us consider,

and therfore, sethen we ben jn fere,
amonges vs lete vs casten here;
For neuere so moche nede hadden we
as now, and ȝe wylen therto se.

or we shall be all destroyed.

For and we distorben now this Matere,
we ben alle distroyed, with-owten dwere.
For we knowen wel Everychon

Our good and glory is gone—

that bope oure good & worschepe is a-gon.
For þe damage that we han, wete ȝe wel,

all owing to Merlin, who fetched Ban and Boors out of Little Britain,

Be Merlynes conseyl hit is don Eche del,
whanne tho two kynges he fet, certayne,
kyng Ban and kyng Boors, out of lytel bretayne,
that jn al the world bettere knyhtes ne be,
and to Arthewr han don homage & fewte.

11897. *held* afterwards corrected from *he*.
11901. *Perdenyan*, *P* roughly corrected from *B*.
11905. *Galaoſt*, *l* squeezed in afterwards.
11928. *bretayne*, *a* roughly corrected from *e*.

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For wete[t]h wel, as longe as *Merly*[n] *with* hem js,
the bettere of hem geten we not, j-wys.
For there nys *non* Man so Myhty here,
Nethyr so wys in non Manere,
that kan hym kepen from *Merlynes* wyle,
& that he ne schal vs alle begylle.
For he knoweth of alle thyng,
what that is don and what is comeng.
and *per*fore nethyr with wepyng ne *with* Mone
we mown not helpen that js to done,
Ne*per* therby wynnen but lytel thyng;
For offys of wo*m*men hit is wepyng.
and *per*fore o*per*wyse we mosten ordeyne
oure londes and peple forto Meynteygne
a3ens this that vs don Noysaunce,
whiche that not be of owre creaunce.
Therfore, goode Lord, for thy gret pyte
on vs and oure peple thou haue Merce!"
aftyr this word these Barou*n*s Echon
seten ful stylle, & word spoken they non;
And thus a gret whyle this dyden they hawnt.
Thus Sone Vpe Ros Kyng Tradelyvau*n*t,
that of northwales was kyng tho;
to thike assemblyng spak he vnto:
"the beste cownceille that j now can,
that we now vs ordeyne Every Man
vppon that contre to setten keping,
there as the hethene hauen here Entring,
and that with al oure chevalrye
Faste thedirward now let vs hye,
and stoppen hem of here vytaylle,
and of here soco*ur* Ek to Faylle.
& jn that tyme mowen we than
Gaderen to vs Many a Man.
So that whanne we han gadered oure Myht,
thanne with hem scholen we fyhte,
For ellis j ne knowe in none degre
From here sege remeved to be."

and is most powerful and wise,

and all-knowing.

It is no use weeping;

that suits women.
Let us do something for our defence;

and may the Lord save us!"

After a long silence,

[leaf 134 *a*]

Tradelivant, king of North Wales, rises:

"Let us watch the country where the heathens have entered,

and cut off their supply of victuals.

In the meantime we will gather forces,

and then give battle."

11931. MS. *weteh*, *h* in darker ink.—MS. *M'ly*.
11936. *&* added in the left margin.

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All praise his scheme,

Whanne that the barouns hadden vndirstondyng
of the wordis of Tradelivaunt the kyng,
Ful wel they hym preisede Euerichon,
& seiden that bettere myhte they not don;
and lik aftyr his owne wylle
plenerly thei wolde hit fulfille,
and axeden into what partyes thei scholden go,
and what Meyne ek scholden gon perto.

which is afterwards carried out.

So that forth they wenten, with-owten faille,
with hem that lefte of the bataylle
Sauf only to kepen that cyte.
forth thanne they wenten ful prevyle,
and kepten the vitailles of the contre,
that non refressching to the hethin scholde be—

He concludes:

"thanne with the Meyne that we gaderen Mown
To putten hem to gret distrucciown.

"If they are beaten, our people will be rich.

and 3if hit happe hem j-scomfyted to be,
thanne Rich may ben al oure Meyne.
This is the beste counseil that j kan;

Now let every man say his advice!"

Now sey his avis here Every Man!
For my counseill at this tyme this js;
Now let Every man Sein his beste devys!"

King Loth rises,

Thanne Ros vpe kyng loth there anon,
and to that peple he seide Echon:
"Lordynges, Sekerly, j ne kan not se
how that these Marches kept scholen be,

and recommends measures of precaution against king Arthur,

but that we setten good asspye
vppon kyng Artheuris londis, Sekerlye,
bencheson of the kynges that with hym be,
and For Merlyn, that is Maister in mani a gre,
that al oure conseil knoweth ful wel
& al that we don here now Everydel.

who may seize the opportunity

For 3if we Ryden the hethen to aspye,
anon he wyl comen vs to distroye
be othir partyes jnto othyr contre;
vppon vs Ryden wilen they, ful sykirle.
Fore for the hethen they wylen not lette

11991. MS. *Thhānc.*

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that vppon vs here men wylen they sette. — to attack and destroy them.
and therfore 3if we now departyd be,
we scholen ben distroyed, ful Sykerle.
For 3if the hethene entren vs here,
thanne of oure socour ben we jn dwere.
Neuertheles 3it scholen 3e vndirstonde — As for himself, he is
that forth to Ryde now wyl j fonde, — ready to go with the others.
and Redy to gon with 3ou jn fere;
now Every man his best avis sey here!"

At that word Ros vp anon Ryhtes — The King of Hundred Knights rises:
the kyng that was of an hundred knyhtes,
and seide to tho lordynges Everychon:
"of kyng lothes wordes dowte haue 3e non; — "No fear of king Arthur! He has gone
For kyng Artheur & his helpinge
ben owte of londe, with-owten lesynge,
To Socouren leodagan the kyng, — to help king Leodagan
that jn his contre hath gret werryng:
jn his lond of Tarmelyde
he hath werre on ech a syde
of kyng Ryown of Yrlond, — against king Rion,
as it is don me to vndirstond.
& as sowdeours they ben forth went
Be Merlynes cownseyl, verayment. — [leaf 134 b]
but alle here strengthis ben kept ful wel, — after leaving all his strongholds in safe keeping.
and of oure deseysse they knowen Echedel.
and therfore we mown the Savyelere gon
Forto defenden vs from oure fon;
For of Artheur hath non drede.
therfore j wolde, so god me spede, — I wish we could have peace with him,
that pes purchaced were betwixen vs two,
als so hastely as hit myhte be do,
that be his socour and strengthe of honde — and his help against the heathen.
To dryve the hethen owt of this londe.
therfore let vs werkyn jn alle thing — Let us follow king Tradelivant's advice.
after þe counseil of tradelyvaunt the kyng.
but er that we passen out of this contre, — But first for a maiden who dwells here in the neighbourhood!
be cownseil be gouerned it is good to be.
there is a Mayde here vs be-syde
that Asses Roche is cleped this tyde,

and jn that Roche dwelleth that May,
She can give good counsel, that ful good cownseil to vs kan say.
For jn that castel sche dwellith, j-wis,
that Maiden, that is so mochel of pris,
for she is the sister of a necromancer." hadegabrantis Sostyr, with-owten lye,
that mochel cowde of Negromauncye,
wherby often-tyme socoured they be;
wherfore be my counseyl, certeinle,
with hire to speken is Myn Entent,
& ellis greved mow we ben, verament."

The kings marvel at Arthur's departure, Whanne that þe barouns vndirstodyn al this,
that kyng Artheur was forthe, with-owten Mys,
thanne Merveillede the barouns Everichon
For what Maner cause he wolde so don.
but understand that it is due to Merlin, but thanne vndirstoden they alle
that be Merlynes counseil hit gan falle.
and repent of their anger with him. So that they Repentyd al jn fere
that Evere with Merlyn angry they were;
but alto late hit was tho
hem to repente: he was a-go.
They resolve to have the borderlands watched. So that they acorded alle jn fere
alle the Marches to don kepen there.
Troops are sent, Thanne sente they forth be eche partye
to kepen the Marches, ful sekerlye,
bothe olde & ȝonge that myhte gon
also mercenaries. & of straunge Sowdiours Manion.
So that forth they wenten & wolden not blynne,
hoping gret Richesse forto wynne
and also to geten hem bothe pris & fame
the better to ben beloued of Every dame.
From Arthur's land, however, no one comes, but owt of kyng Arthewris lond
Non sowdiour wolde comen, j vndirstond;
For good j-nowgh they hadde be-fore,
and for þat cawse they wold not comen thore;
on account of the king's liberality. For Artheur avaunsed hem Everichon,
Er that he owt of his lond gan gon;
and ȝit he behyhte hem better to do,
whanne that aȝen he come hem vnto.

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The fyrste cyte that they dyde kepe*n* tho
was toward Cornewaille, with-owten mo,
whiche that thike tyme Nawtes hyghte,
there as the hethene gonnen alyghte.
Thyder gan gon kyng Ydyers
with a meyne bothe prowd & fers,
that beleften of his Bataylle,
as j 3ow seye with-owten faylle.
and whanne kyng ydyers cam to þat cyte,
Ful glad and blithe gonnen they to be.
For every day affrayed they were
of tho hethen that weren comen there,
that everyday there, certeinle,
they wenten abowte that cyte
and distroyed alle jn virowne abowte
the contre there, with-owten dowte.
For of hem Sevene thousend there be
jn this partie aryved, ful sekerle.
so that there dar non man passen therby
with-owten gret strengthe, Sekerly.

(1) King Ydiers marches to Nawtes in Cornwall, the landing-place of the heathen.

The inhabitants are joyful,

having been exposed to the depredations

of 7000 vikings.

The tothyr cyte that they Senten Vnto
hindicam hyghte at thyke tyme tho.
Thedir rod kyng Newtris of Garlot
with thre thousend knyghtes, wel j wot,
that beleften hym of his bataylle;
to that cyte he rod, with-owten faylle.
thanne they of the cyte ful gret joye made,
and of his comeng they weren ryht glade.
For with-owten comfort & socour they were
a3ens the hethene that aryveden there.
for they distroyeden al that contre
bothe of corn and of bestes, ful certeinle.
but whanne kyng Newtris entryd that cyte
that jn cornwaille stood, ful pleynerle,
he it wel gouernede with al his myht,
lyk as he was bothe worthy kyng and knyht.
and alle the strengthes that belonged per-to,

[leaf 134 *c*]

(2) King Newtris marches to Hindicam;

its inhabitants likewise rejoice at the relief.

The king manages well,

equipping the strongholds,

12116. MS. *pleynerre.*

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Ful manfully he let Stuffen hem tho,
sending for soldiers, and sente aftyr sowdeours jnto eche contre,
Tyl Sevene thousend he hadde in semble
what on hors and what on foote
(So manye he hadde, wel j wote)
with-owten tho that weren jn towne that day,
Fyve thousend men sensable, j dar we[l] say.
cutting off the supply of the enemies, thanne so wel kepten they that contre,
that non of the hethene, ful Sykerle,
but lytel refresschyng cowden they wynne,
and giving battle every now and then. and euere among was bataille hem betwynne.
So that the hethen be aventure
losten gret peple, j 3ow ensure.

Newtris has a son, for kyng Newtris was a worthy knyht,
and a sone he hadde of ryht gret myht
be his wyf, that Soster was sche
To kyng Artheur jn alle degre.
sixteen years old, this 3ong child was xvj 3er of age,
ful of bewte and of gret corage.
by his wife Blasine, who is a daughter of Ygwern (Arthur's mother) by her first husband, the duke of Tyndagel. his modir qwene Blasine hyghte,
Qwene Ygwernes dowghter, j sey 3ow ryhte,
that vterpendragon hadde to wyve,
aforn dewk Tyndagellis wif be his lyve,
whiche dewk this blasine on Ygwerne be-gat,
er that he deyde, j wot wel that.

Vppon this same qwene Blasine thanne
begat kyng newtris this worthy manne.
This son, later on a knight of the Round Table, is called Galachim. For as here reherseth this storye,
a knyht of þe rownd table he was, sekerlye.
his name was that tyme jn presence
Sire Galachim, that tyme dewk of clarence.

When he hears of the war between his father and Arthur, So whanne this galachim gan to vndirstonde
that Swich a werre there was jn londe,
how his fadir kyng Newtris with Arthour gan werre,
he asks his mother about her parents, To his modyr he wente, & sowhte not ferre,
and seide: "dere modir, j preie now the,
The trewthe of on thing telle thou me:
were 3e not dewk hoelis dowhter of tyndagel

12126. MS. *we*. 12142. *Tyndagellis*, *d* corrected from *g*.

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and of Ygwerne j-born, that men knewen ful wel?
wheche after wedded kyng vterpendragon,
on whom he gat kyng Artheur, Man of Renown,
the wheche myn vncle sothly he js
and therto a worthy kyng of pris,
that xj kynges scomfyted in bataylle
with Ryht fewe peple, with-owten faylle.
and therfore, My Modir, j charge now the
of this the sothe that ȝe tellen Me.
For Evere hit Renneth jn My thowht
that of so worthy prowesse were he nowht,
but ȝif he were Vterpendragones sone the kyng,
that Most worthyest was jn his Reigneng."

and about Arthur's birth.
This glorious conqueror, he thinks,
would not be so valiant,
were he not the son of king Uter-pendragon.

Whanne that his Modir vndirstood al this thing
of Galachim hire sone, that was so ȝyng,
Anon gan sche to wepen ful sore,
as a lady that knew the cause wherfore,
And Seide to Galachym Anon Ryht tho,
as that tyme hire herte fyl vnto,
and ful sore wepinge sche gan to telle
of al the cas, how hit be-felle,
and seide: "myn owne dere sone thanne,
thin Em he is, that worthy Manne,
and My brother he is, ful Sekerly,
for bothe weren we born of on body,
as j haue herd my Modyr say
to-forn this tyme ful Many a day,
that for that child Made gret Mone,
So sone aftir his birthe awey was done,
and deliuered was to on veleyne;
that is now soth þat ȝe heren me seyne.
and how aftyr hit was discouered Echdel
be Antron, that hym Norsched ful wel,
of whom Ek that Merlyne the sothe tolde,
and Ek that witnessid Vlphyn the bolde.
and how that Vter pendragon the kyng
Me Maryed to my lord aboven alle thyng.
but j am sory in Mani a degre

His mother,
with tears,
[leaf 134 *d*]
assures him
that Arthur is his uncle.
She tells of the sending away of Arthur after his birth,
the eventual disclosure by Antron,
Merlin, and Ulfin,
her own marriage,

12158. *of* added above the line. 12184. MS. *manyaday*.

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the opposition of the barons,

that the Barouns of this contre
Ne welen not Resceyven hym as for here kyng,
whiche me sore repentith ouer alle thing.
but behold, the grete God of Myht,
considering that he is kyng be Ryht,

and of the miracle of the stone.

hym ches be Myracle of the ston
& of the swerd aforn hem Echon"—
and hym tolde of Mani an aventure
that of hym be-fel, j 3ow Ensure.

Galachim prays to God to be knighted by Arthur,

Whanne that Galachim gan vndirstonde
the dedis of þat worthy kyng jn londe,
anon he besowhte God, certeynlye,
that jn this world he scholde neuere dye,
Tyl that kyng had mad hym knyht,
that holden was so worthy jn fyht.

and vows fidelity.

"and 3if onis with my swerd gyrde he Me,
al my lyve after, ful certeinle,
with hym to dwelle, to lyven & to deye,
j sey 3ow, Modir, be my feye!"

He leaves his mother,

thus from his Modir departed he thanne
as an hevy & a pensyvous Manne,
and him be-thouhte thanne Everich owr
how he myhte comen to kyng Arthewr.

and sends a messenger to his cousin Gawnehet (or Gawein),

Anon a messenger dide he sende
after Gawnenet, his cosin so hende,
that was kyng lothis Sone,

appointing a secret meeting.

that to hym to brokelond scholde he come
also prevyly as he Evere he myhte;
the day was set of Metyng Ryhte.
and with this the Messenger wente his way
To his cosin Gawnenet, þe sothe to say.

Now let us return to the kings at Sorhant.

Now lefe we here of this storye,
and to speken of þe kynges now let vs hye
that at Sorhant to-gederis dwelle,
and how that of aventuris they don telle.

[leaf 135 *a*]

(3) King Loth

Now aftyr cometh hit Jnto Memorye
hou from Sorhant departyd kyng loth, sekerlye,

12197. *hym*, *y* corrected from *e*. 12220. *afte*, *e* added afterwards.

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and wente forth streyht To Garle cyte — marches to Garle,
with ful thre thousend of his Meyne,
that weren holden worthy knyhtes & goode,
whiche with him out of þe bataille ȝoode. 12236
& whanne he was comen to that cyte,
the cetezeins maden joye and solempnite; — and is welcomed by the distressed inhabitants.
for the hethen diden hem ful gret anoye,
and al that contre they deden distroye 12240
what with Robberye and brennenge;
that contre they wasted jn alle thinge.
Anon as kyng loth knew of this, — He sends for soldiers;
For sowdeours he sente, with-owten Mys, 12244
Faste abowtes jnto Eche contre
to geten as Manye as þanne myhte he.
and Er a Mounthe was fully past, — within a month he has 10,000 men.
ten thousend sowdeours he hadde jn hast 12248
with-owten hem of that cyte,
weren foure thousend, certeinle,
To kepen that cyte bothe day & Nyht,
whiles þat kyng loth Rod owt to fyht. 12252
So that often-tymes he with hem Mette, — He often meets the enemies.
and to-gederis Many strokes they sette.
So that his pore bachelerye
gat often gret goodis, sekerlye. 12256
and al that evere they myhte wynne, — Whatever booty is won, is distributed.
kyng loth hit parded there hem betwynne.
and that causede that gret Meyne
To kyng loth Repeirede, certeinle, 12260
For bencheson of his gentilnesse & fre, — His liberality attracts more people.
Sprang so wyde jnto Eche contre;
Thre thousend comen to hym anon Ryht,
For that he was holden so fre a knyht. 12264
and faire children he hadde be his wyve;
worthiere bodyes weren non on lyve.

Soth hit is that kyng lothis wyf — King Loth's wife is also a stepsister of king Arthur's (p. 229).
was kyng Artheuris soster, with-owten stryf, 12268
Ryht evene fully jn the same degre

12267. In the right margin: *the birthe and the Engedrure of Mordret.*

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as was kyng Newtris wyfe, Sekerle.
She has four sons by her husband: this lady bar be hire lord, Loth the kyng,
fowre worthy childeren, with-owten lesing: 12272
Gawnehet (or Gawein), Agravains, Garrers, and Gaheries; and one son by Arthur: Mordret. Gawnenet, Agravains, & sire Garrers,
Gaheryes, foure knyhtes bothe goode & fers.
on the tothyr syde was Sire Mordret
hire Eldest sone, with-owten let, 12276
whiche that on hire be Artheur Engendrid was,
and wyle ȝe now heren be a wondyr cas.
I will tell you of his generation, For j thenke to tellen ȝow Every del
how he was begeten on hire ful snel, 12280
So thanne the bettere may this storye
ben More alowed, ful Sekerlye.
of which many are ignorant. For Mani Men knowen not how þat it was
of his be-geteng, ne nowht the cas. 12284
therfore they preisen it moche the lasse,
For they ben vnknoweng of day & plase.
The barons were assembled at Cardiff in Wales hyt behappede, as j ȝow schal say,
that the Barons alle vppon a day 12288
of þe Rewm of logres assembled were
at kerdyf jn wales, with-owten dwere,
to choose a new king (p. 181). there forto chesen hem a newe kyng
aftyr vter pendragoun, with-owten lesyng. 12292
Loth and his wife were there; so that kyng loth with hym gan lede
with hym his wyf jnto that stede;
and so dyden oþer barons also,
that here wyves dyde with hem go. 12296
So that kyng loth j-logged he was
and alle his Meyne jn a ful fair plas,
Antron, jn wheche place Antron jlogged was he
Kay, and with hym Sire kay, ful certeinle. 12300
and Arthur and artheur ful previly jlogged he was
jn þe kyngges chombre, so fil the cas.
[leaf 135 b] And Whanne Kyng Loth to Mete Was Set,
aftir Antron he sente, with-owten let, 12304
and also anon aftyr Sire kay,
that but a ȝong knyht was that day.
were to stay in the king's lodgings. So þat kyng loth ordeyned there
that Antron & Sire kay j-logged were 12308
jn his owne chambre ful prevyly;

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and 3ong Artheur was logged faste by
at thentre of the chambre jn a korner,
as befyl that tyme for a worthy sqwyer.

Arthur slept in a corner of the room.

this Artheur was a faire 3ong man,
and mochel of norture that tyme he kan.
and that lady he was fayn to plese
& ek to kyng loth to don him ese.
This lady was both fayr & 3yng
and a good wo*m*man ouer alle thing,
whom that Artheur lovede prevyly.
but sche ne rowhte sche wiste not, sikerly,
for stedfast sche was to hire Lord
and him to plese at his owne acord.
So hit behappede, as J 3ow say,
that al the Baronage hadde taken a day
at the Blake cros to meten jn fere
there forto touchen of here matere.
So on the nyht before hit happede tho,
that kyng loth scholde thider go,
he charged prevyly his meyne
that hors & harneis redy scholde be
at midnyht with him forto gon ;
thus prevyly he charged hem everichon.
So that his meyne, verament,
Fulfild jn haste his comaun*d*eme*n*t
vnknowe*n* the lady of alle this thing.
ful prevyly from hire wente he stalkyng,
and jn hire bed lefte hire stylle on slepe,
for of his goynge took sche non kepe.
and Artheur, that wel knew of al this,
that jn that corner þere lay, j-wys,
took good kepe of the kynges goynge,
and ful prevyly to here bed wente he stalkynge,
and there he turnede hym bothe to & fro,
but 3it this lady on slepe was tho.

Arthur was handsome and courteous,

the queen was young and fair,

and Arthur loved her secretly.

One morning the barons were to meet at the Black Cross.

The king ordered his men to be ready to start at midnight.

The queen knew nothing about it.

But Arthur noticed the departure of the king,

and stole into her bed.

So as hit happede this kas gan gon,
this lady awok & hire tornede anon,
and him enbraced al jn hire Slepe,

The queen embraced him unconsciously,

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as if it had been her husband.
that of non othir took sche non kepe
but of hire owne lord so dere,
weneng to hire to ben hire fere.

Arthur, understanding how it was,
and whanne that Arthewr felte this,
thanne wiste he wel, with-owten mys,
that of hym sche took non kepe
but as a womman that was jn slepe.

embraced her in return,
So that he embraced hire ageyn,
and so be hire he lay, jn certeyn,
where-offen the lady ful joyful was;
sche wende hire Lord hadde ben jn þat plas.

and begot Mordret.
and that Nyht, in certein to say,
was mordret begeten, with-owten delay,
jn this maner as ȝe now here.
And whanne that Artheur his wil hadde there,

When the queen had fallen fast asleep, he stole away.
he ne slepte non maner thing,
tyl that lady was fallen jn Slombring;
thanne stalkyd Artheur previliche a-way.
For þer-of ne wyste non, the sothe to say,

Next morning he told her,
tyl on the morwe, as hit gan falle,
that hym-self hit tolde jn the halle,

whilst serving her at dinner.
whanne sche was set at hire denere,
and Artheur as hire kervere knelede there.

She had noticed his long kneeling.
So that hit happede tho, this lady gent
of his long knelyng took good entent.

and made a remark about it.
"leve sevs," sche seide, "ȝong Bacheler,
Ful longe [now] ȝow thinken that ȝe knelen her."

[leaf 135 c]
And He Answerede Ful Boldlich Ageyn:

He replied: "I cannot kneel too long. For I cannot deserve the great boon." She axed for an explanation.
"to longe may j not knelen, certeyn,
For j ne may not deserven the grete bownte,
myn owne lady, that ȝe han don for me."
thanne axede this lady anon ryht:
"what bowntes ben tho, gentyl wyht?"

Arthur made her promise not to tell anybody,
thanne seide Artheur, certeinle,
that for him discouered scholde hit neuere be,
ne non thyng to hire he wolde discrye,
but ȝif of trowthe sche wolde hym affye

12364. *Slombring*, *o* blurred.
12374. MS. *longe ȝow*.

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that neuer sche scholde discouere it to non creature,
and also anothir thing sche schold hym Sure : and not to do him any bodily harm.
that harm to his body scholde sche neuere do,
ne be hire to ben purchased nether to ne fro.
And sche hire trowthe Ensured hym ful son
as womman of that Mater took kepe non.
thanne anon Arthewr gan hire to telle
prevyly betwixen hem how hit be-felle, Then he told her how it all had happened.
and jn what Maner that he be hire lay ;
al he hire tolde thike same day.
Anon this lady gan wexen Red, The queen, almost dend with shame,
that for pure schame sche was ny ded ;
but non wyht wiste of here covyne.
for at that tyme wolde sche no more dyne left the table,
but let tables ben drawen, verament,
and ful faste to hire chombre sche went. and hurried into her room.
lo, thus 3onge Artheur be his soster lay,
that kyng Lothis wif was that day ;
but hit behappede neuere aftyr More. She never after had such intercourse with him.
and thus was Mordret of hire body bore,
For sche knew wel be tyme & space
that be Arthewr with childe sche was.

Whanne that the tydynges gonnen forto springe When the news of Arthur's exaltation spread, and Mordret was born, she loved him in her heart.
that this 3onge Artheur scholde be kynge,
and this Mordret was tho j-bore,
thanne jn herte louede sche him wel more
thanne ony man cowde tellen that day,
but for hire lord sche dorste nowht say.
and mochel sorwe sche hadde jn herte She was very sorry for the war
for that werre, that was so smerte,
and jn that Rewm so Many a schowr
betwixen hire lord and kyng Arthowr between him and her husband.—
and betwixen oper peple also
that in theke Rewm weren tho.
So that hit happed vppon a day, One day, Gawein comes, ready for hunting,
that 3onge Gaweyn scholde hym go play,
and qweyntely was he arayed there
jn Manere of a 3ong sqwyere
that on huntyng scholde fare

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to chasen bothe the hert & hare
with two les of grehoundis jn þat place,
& besides him stood there ȝit two brace.
he was the fairest schapen man
that jn his tyme ony knew than;
but this storye not declareth here
Sauf of on thing in this manere:
that he hadde certein tymes of þe day;
what that they weren j schal ȝow say.
whanne that he ros on morwen vpryht,
jn the world ne was there a strengere knyht;
and at the owr of pryme, with-owten delay,
his strenkthe hit doublede every day;
and at the our of Tiers hit doublede eft sone,
and eft-sones hit dowbled at the None;
and so alle the oures of the nyht
with him it abod jnto day lyht;
So that every morwenyng
thus ferde gawayn, with-outen lesyng.
Whanne gaweyn entrede the chambre there,
as ȝe hauen herd rehersed here,
His modyr Lay be on chemene,
and there-jn fyr ful gret plente,
as a womman that ful pensif was
For hire brothyr jn that plas,
and for the werre, was hem be-twene;
thus lay that lady & morned be-dene;
and for schedyng of blood ful gret plente,
that was amonges the cristiente,
and for the hethen that entred were
jnto that Lond amonges hem there.

with many greyhounds.
He is a fine man,
with one peculiarity: at the different hours of the day,
his strength increases and decreases (cf. Notes).
He finds his mother by the fire,
[leaf 135 *d*]
brooding over the war between the Christians,
and the invasion of the heathen.

Whanne that lady Gaweyn beheld,
that tyme it were to beren armes & scheld,
Sche began to wepen riht sore.
Anon Sire gaweyn axede hire wherfore.
"certes, sone, j haue now gret Skyl,
For ȝe ȝoure tyme ne don but spyl
and ek ȝoure bretherin, jn certeyn,
ȝe don but spillen ȝoure tyme jn veyn,

When she sees him,
she begins to weep.
"You and your brothers waste your time;

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that worthy knyhtes myhten be
jn kyng Artheurs cowrt, ful certeinle.
For 3oure vncle he is be ryht,
and jn this world not a bettere knyht.
with him J wolde 3e weren jn plase
pes betwyxen 3oure fadir & him to purchase.
for hit is ful gret pyte
that be-twixen hem swich distaunce schold be
and of othir barouns jn the Rewm,
that of here kyng wylen taken non 3em.
and god knoweth the Ryhtwysnesse,
that hath hem browht in gret distresse;
For mochel more han they lost thanne wonne.
& now this hethen on vs han begonne,
that scholen distroyen vs everychon,
3if goddis help ne come not Son.
and of hym helpe geten we non
that scholde vs fende from oure fon,
which is 3oure oncle kyng Artheur,
that scholde vs helpe jn every stour.
worschepe & los scholde 3e purchase
and pes to maken jn every plase,
and namly that 3oure fadir & he
goode frendis that they myhten be.
and non other good 3e don this tyde
but eche day on huntyng forto ryde
To chasen the hare in eche contre,
and thus 3oure tyme losen 3e;
wherfore 3e ben alle to blame,
that myhten becomen men of better fame."

you might be knights at Arthur's court,

and make peace between him and your father.

God knows the justice of his cause.

The heathen destroy us;

and we get no help from Arthur,

who ought to be our defender.

No good do you do but going a-hunting every day."

Thanne to his modyr spak 3onge Gaweyn
wordis that to hire weren ful pleyn:
"telle 3e this for trewthe to me,
that Arthour be ryht kyng scholde be,
and þat 3oure brothir he is also,
& ek 3e seyn oure vncle þerto?"
"3e, sones, with-owten drede,
he is 3oure vncle, so god me spede"—

Gawein inquires about Arthur's rights and relationship.

His mother gives full information.

12467. *J* corrected from *3e*.

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& sette on & tolde hem al on ende
hólyche hou that Mater gan wende.
Gawein vows to take knighthood only from Arthur, And whanne that gaweyn herde al this,
anon to his Modir he seide, j-wys: 12504
" be þe trowthe j owe to God & ȝow,
of on thing j schal maken avow:
that swerd ne armvre to beren jn fyht,
tyl that kyng Artheur haue mad me knyht. 12508
and to help him against his foes. and we to his cowrt scholen gon
him forto helpen aȝens his fon,
ȝyf ȝe welen helpen vs owht þerto;
The brothers will do the same. bothe my bretheren scholen þedir go 12512
of hym forto ben dubbid knyhtes
& after to helpen him jn his fyhtes
[leaf 136 a] Aȝens Hem Alle that Hym Wrong Wylen Don;
we scholen him gon helpen Everichon." 12516
The queen says she will bless the day when Loth and Arthur are good friends again. "Now, swete children, as towching Me,
Neuere distorbeled scholde ȝe be.
For that day wolde j ones abyde,
and blessin j wolde that jlke tyde, 12520
To sen ȝoure Fadir & ȝoure oncle jn fere
as goode frendes as Euere they were;
hit were to me as joyful tydyng
as to ben lady of alle worldly thing." 12524
Gawein asks her to cease weeping; "Now, leve Modyr," quod Gawayn tho,
"lef ȝe ȝoure weping & doth not so.
For on avow j schal here Make:
Aftyr that j my leve take, 12528
his father and his uncle shall be reconciled, before he sees her again. J schal neuere sen ȝow Eft ageyn,
tyl my Fadir & Min vncle, certeyn,
Ryht goode frendes that they be,
Er that Eftsones ȝow, Modir, j se. 12532
and Min owne bretheren scholen gon with me
aȝens My Fadyr al forto be."
And she replies: "God make you all good men!" "Now swete sone," quod the Modir thanne,
"God Make ȝow alle Ryht goode Menne!" 12536

During this conversation, And as Gawayn thus to his Modyr spak,
jnto the chambre there Entrede, with-owten lak,

12507. *armvre*. *v* a hybrid of *v* and *u*.

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bothe Agrevains and ek Guerrers
and Gaheries, þat weren stronge & fers,
and herden there of here talkyng
& also of here modris gret morneng.
thanne seide Agrevains to Gaweyn anon:
"ȝe ben more to blame thanne we echon,
For ȝe ben eldest of vs alle;
therfore to ȝow hit hadde be-falle
vs to han lad, knyhtes to han be
mad of him, most of dignite.
and him to serve let vs now reke,
of whom worschipe al the world doth speke.
For god forbede but ȝif that we
as worthi jn armes scholden be
as they sein Ambroy oyselet is,
For here he moste kithen his pris.
For the hethene ben entred vs vppon,
& distroyen the contre be on & on,
and jn this contre peple non js
hem owt to dryven, with-owten mys,
but only be helpe of kyng Arthewr.
therfore now let vs gon this owr
and armes of hym forto take
and with him to risen, bothe slepe & wake,
and with him to fyhten aȝens his fon,
For so is vs mochel better to don.
For here non thing ne mown we wynne;
therfore lete vs faste hens twynne,
rathere than here to lesen oure renown
and with the hethen ben taken & leid in presown
and so to lesen bothe oure tyme & age;
this is non of the sevene sage."

Gawein's brothers have entered the room.

Agravains says to him: "You are most to blame for our indolence, for you are the eldest.

Now let us go and serve him whom the whole world praises.

The heathen are over us,

and only king Arthur can drive them away.

Let us take arms of him, and follow him,

rather than losing here renown and liberty."

Whanne gaweyn herde his brothir so sayn,
thanne was he jn herte ful fayn,
and was ryht joyful of his talkyng,
whiche him plesede ouer alle thing.
"Now lakketh vs nowht at this Tyde

Gawein, delighted at his brother's words,

12570. MS. *is non of nō of the.*

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asks his mother to see to their equipment.

but oure aray wherwith to Ryde;
and therfore *with*-jnne these xiiij dayes,
Modyr, ȝe helpen here now to arayen vs."

She joyfully promises to do so,

whanne that here Modyr vndirstod this,
a ioyful wo*m*man sche was, j-wys,
and thanked God ful Many a Sithe.
"For ȝow to arayen j schal hyen me blyve,
For hors ne harneys scholen ȝe no*n* lakke,
Nethir that be-houith to ȝoure bakke."

and her sons are as merry as bird on bough.

than*n*e weren the children glad jnowh̄
and also Merye as bryd on bowh̄.

Now of this leve now we oure talkyng,
and let vs forth speken of the kyng,
that out of sorh*a*m cite ryt ful hevyly
bencheson of the hethene þ*a*t ben him by.

[leaf 136 *b*]

Now forthermore let vs tellen son

After the three other kings have left Sorhaut,

how that these iij kynges ben agon
owt of Sorh*a*m, that cyte there,
jnto othir contres, *with*-owten dwere.

(4) king Clariouns starts,

than*n*e Rod owt kyng clariou*n*, j vndirstonde,
that was kyng of Northhumberlonde,

and rides to Berland

and Rod him to on fair cite,
that berland hyhte, certeinle;
whiche cite he kepte wondir wel

with 2000 men.

with iij thousend Men bothe goode & lel
with-owte*n* hem that jn the town were,
of whiche fyve hundred fond he there.

He holds the border-lands, fights the heathen with varying success,

So that tho Marches he kepte ful strong,
and Euere with the hethene he fawht among,
and ofte*n* he wan & ofte*n* he loste,
as hit behappeth jn Every oste.

and cuts off their supply.

thus this kyng anoyed hem sore,
for jn that contre vitaille no More
Mihte*n* they gete*n* to here Refressching;
So hit hadde vpe gadered clariou*n* the kyng.

(5) Then the King of a Hundred Knights,

So that after kyng Clariou*n* was gon,
the kyng of c. knyhtes isswede ano*n*

12591. The top of the column blank.

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owt of sorham cite, ful Sekerly,
with iij thousend men of armes him by.
to the cyte of Malehant gan he Ryde,
þere a gentyl lady hym abod that tyde;
this cite marched vppon his lond.
and for the hethene, j vndirstond,
abowtes faste by they lye,
that was þe cause þedir gan he hye.
and the barouns hym preiden echon
vppon the hethen with hem to gon.
this kyng, that was so worthy a man,
fulfilled the barouns wille than.
(this kyng evere kept an c knyhtes,
wherby he hadde his name be ryhtes;
but his name was be his baptesm
Aingnignes clept aftir his borntempe.)
that [tho] marches kepte he wel al abowte,
So that of þe hethen they hadden litel dowte.

with 3000 men, rides to the city of Malehant,

which is surrounded by the vikings.

The real name of the King of a Hundred Knights is Aingnignes.

He guards the borderlands well.

Aftyr him past owt Tradelivaunt the kyng
owt of that cyte, with-owten lesyng.
and to northwales he took the way,
to on of his cites, as j ȝow say.
with iij thousend of armed men
jnto his contre rod he then.
and of his comeng they weren ful glad,
for of the hethen gret drede they had,
that dyden ful gret distroccioun
al the contre abowtes jn virown.
thanne sente this kyng anon riht there
aftyr sowdiours every where,
So that vij thousend men he hadde
with hem that he ferst forth ladde
what on hors & what on fote;
this was his somme, wel j wote,
with-outen hem of þe town, pleinly,
þat weren iiij thousend, sekerly,
Wheche Hem Defendyd Jn Every tyde
aȝens a chastel there beside.

(6) King Tradelivant marches to North Wales.

The inhabitants are glad of his coming.

He sends for soldiers,

and soon has 7000 men,

besides the 4000 in the town.

[leaf 136 c]

From a neighbouring castle.

12629. MS. *that marches.*

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a maid called Carville assists the heathen.

that a maiden that carville hyhte,
Socoured the hethen with alle hire myhte; 12652
hadagabrantis soster, certein, was sche,
that thike castel hadde jn baylle.

They are safe in those border-lands,

And be tho marches, j sey 3ow ryhte,
non of the kynges there ne myhte, 12656
for non power that they myhten do,
non noysaunce the hethen don vnto.
for bothe viaunde & vytaylle þe hethen hadde
out of þe castel ech day to hem ladde. 12660

and the castle cannot be taken.

for that castel so strong hit was tho,
that non harm myhte comen hit vnto.

(Carville is an enchantress,

(For this carville cowde more of enchantement
than ony oþer womman, verament, 12664

like Morgain

except Morgain, that Sostir was
To kyng Artheur, jn Everi plas,

and Juanne,

oþer ellis juanne, the love of Merlyn,
that of enchantement coude wel & fyn; 12668
For sche knew more of merlynes konnyng
thanne alle þe creatures that weren levyng,

of whom more later on.)

as 3e scholen heren jn tyme comeng,
whanne 3e me heren speke of swich a thing.) 12672
what so þorwh helpe of that castel
the hethen ben refresschid wel,

The expulsion of the heathen is reserved to Arthur

wherfore cast out of londe mow they not be
but be helpe of kyng Arthour, Sykerle, 12676
and be the helpe ek of kyng Ban,
that is holden so worthi a man,
also kyng Bors jn here compenye
(þe sonere out of þis lond scholen they hye), 12680
and be helpe of oþer mo:

and king Loth's children.

kyng Lothis children with hem scholen go,
as here-afte[r] 3e scholen heren say
jn storye j rad this jlke same day. 12684

(7) King Brangor rides to the city of Strangor,

Than owt of sorhant wente kyng Brangor
with iij thousend men j-armed thor,
and to strangore cite he rod ful faste;

12680. *fon'e*, abbreviation mark in darker ink.
12683. MS. *here afte.*

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For next to the Roche hit was ful preste,
there as the hethene j-logged were.
and aftyr sowdiours he sent Every where,
tyl that assemblyd he hadde the Ryht
vj thousend armed & Redy to fyht
with-owten iij thousend he with him browhte,
that forto werren on the hethen ne dredden they nowht.

and sends for more soldiers.

this kyng brangores hadde a wif,
kyng Andoannes dowhter, with-outen strif,
that of costantyn-Noble was Emperovr
and therto a man of ful gret honour.
and be his wif, that ded was,
tweyne dowhtres he hadde jn that plas,
of whiche kyng Brangor weddid þe tone,
and þe tothir at costantyn beleft alone,
that weddid was to the kyng of hungrye,
as j sey ȝow certeinlye.

King Brangors' wife is a daughter of Andoans (Adrians), emperor of Constantinople.

Her sister is married to the king of Hungary.

So that at thende of fyve ȝer, j wen,
a knave child hadden they hem be-twen
of the fairest forme that myhte be,
that becam bothe worthi & strong, sikerle.
at whiche tyme whanne kyng brangor
out of Sorhant paste thor,
thike child of age that tyme was
a knyht to ben Mad jn ony plas.
and he was clepid be his Ryht Name
ȝonge sagremour, that child of fame,
whiche that after dyde gret prowesse,
as the lond of logres bereth witnesse,
as aftir jn this storye here scholen ȝe fynde,
whanne aftyr to this Mater j come be kynde.

These have a son,

handsome,

brave, and strong,

old enough to become a knight,

and called Sagremour.

[leaf 136 d]

The Renown that Sprang Abrod so Wyde
of kyng Artheur jn Every syde
and of his largenesse & of his gentrie,
alle the world hit spak of, trewelye.
so þat jn alle stronge contres, with-owten lesynge,
was non speche but of Artheur the kynge.

When king Arthur's fame spreads throughout the world,

12688. A second *Roche* crossed out after *ful*.
12696. *d* crossed out after *kyng*. 12710. MS. *paſten*.

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For his los tho sprange so wyde,
young Sagremour, at Constantinople, also hears of him, that jnto costantynnoble hit cam̃ that tyde;
that so ferforth hit cam to Ere,
so 3onge sagremo*ur* herde *per*of there. 12728
that nas 3it but fyftene 3er old,
a fair 3ong Bacheler and a bold.
and wha*n*ne that he herde this tydyng,
and wants to be knighted by him. he ne wolde not lette*n* for non thing, 12732
tyl he were Mad knyht of his hond,
the sothe j do 3ow to vndirstond.
He speaks of him to his council, and often to his counseil seide he
that a worthy man Moste he nedis be— 12736
"wha*n*ne that myn ayel, adrians the kyng,
of him knyht was mad, with-owte*n* lesing."
For that he was *þe* nexte Eyr
that to theke Empire scholde Repeyr. 12740
and swears never to be a knight except through him. so that Sagremo*ur* swor, certein,
that knyht scholde he neue*re* be, pleyn,
tyl that kyng Artheur of Breteygne
hym knyht hadde Mad, jn certeygne. 12744
So that they spoken *per*-offen so ofte,
that thike noise wax hye on lofte.
Adrians therefore sends his grandson to Brita'n. So that Adrians gan him to hye
Sagremo*ur*s to sende forth, Sekerlye, 12748
jn-to breteyne with gold & fe
and what thing that to him belonged on lond & se.
Now speke we no more 3it of this Matere,
but here-after More scholen 3e here. 12752

3yt procedith forth this storye:
After Brangor, (*sic*) king Karados leaves Sorhant, wha*n*ne kyng brangores was past, trewlye,
owt of Sorhant thike cyte,
kyng karados aftir wente, sikerle 12756
with his Meyne arayed ful Ryht,
foure thousend men Redy to fyht.
and goes to Strangor. and to strangore cite he wente ful faste
(alle his Men of armes with him paste) 12760

12731. *whānne*, *n* corrected from *t*.
12742. *pleyn*, *p* corrected from *f*, appearing like a hybrid of those characters.
12747. *him* twice, the former crossed out.

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whiche cite he kepte ful wel
as a wys worthy werreour & a lel.
ȝit sente he abowtes wilde where
aftyr mo Sowdyowrs to han hem there,
so that atte laste assembled there was
vij thousend men jn that plas
wel j-armed with swerd and lawnce,
of stedis & coursers þat cowden wel praunce.
ȝit at that tyme non hethen there were,
wherfore eche nyht they lyen owt there
jn feldes and jn weyes bothe
to aspien whanne þe hethen comen, forsothe
and anon as that they myhten aspye
that ony of the hethen drow ther nye,
aȝens hem faste the wolden ryde
and with hem fyhten jn that tyde.
So that often they wonnen gret good,
Whanne that the hethen hem withstood.

He sends about for more soldiers,

keeps a good look-out for the heathen,

and often attacks them with success.

Aftyr that these vj Kynges Weren gon [leaf 137 *a*]
Out of Sorhant cite everychon,
thanne of Scotlond Agwyseax the kyng
out forth he paste, with-owten lesyng,
The richest kyng of that contre;
but as of armes onnethis cowde he.
this kyng out forth rod with v thousend men,
and to þe cyte of corange wente he then,
whiche that jn scotlond tho stood,
where as manye of the hethene abod.
For there nas but xx scottysch myle
where as the hethen lyen thyke whyle
at the castel of Vaumdebers,
where as the sege was strong & fers,
that non man of hem the nombre cowden telle
of the hethen, that weren so felle.
whanne this kyng jnto corange j-entred was,
of the cetezeins fond he jn that plas
Fyve thousend redy armed to fyht.

(9) King Augwiseas of Scotland

rides to the city of Corange.

Twenty Scotch miles from there, numerous heathen besiege a castle.

In Corange are 5000 fighting men.

12767. MS. *lawñce.*

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More soldiers are sent for.
3it sente he forth bothe day & Nyht
to seken soudeours be Every syde;
So that him comen with-jnne a tyde
what on hors & what on foote
x thousend Saudiours, wel j wote,
with-owten alle his owne Meyne
and Ek the peple of that cyte.

They fight the heathen,
so with the hethen helden they bataille,
& often goodes wonnen, with-owten faille,

and repair the walls of the city.
and repareilled the walles of here cyte,
þere as it was most wont feble to be.
thus longe durede þe werre tho
be-twene thike partyes bothe to.

(10) Duke Escam
Thanne aftir this out of Sorhant wente
dewk Escam of kambenye, veramente,
with iiij thousend j-armed ful wel
what on hors & on foote Echedel.
And forth he Rod bothe day & Nyht,

rides to his city Cambeny,
tyl to Cambenie cite he cam ful Ryht,
the whiche of Richesse hadde gret plente
and þer-jnne thre thousend men, Sikerle.

and is welcomed by the inhabitants.
and whanne they syen þe dewk cambenye,
Gret joye they Maden, certeinlye,
For þe deseisse they hadde there
of the hethen, that weren hem nere,
that comeng weren to on castel,
For whiche kyng Artheur ordeyned ful wel,
Er that he paste ouer the se
jnto tarmelyde lond, Sikerle.

He sends for more people
3it sente that dewk al abowte
to geten More peple to his Rowte;
So that vij thousend he hadde Redy,
as this storie witnessith apertly,
with-owten hem þat weren jn that cite,
which þat kepe weren ordeyned, Sykerle.

and fights the heathen.
and with the hethen fowhten they ofte,
for mochel Sorwe was þere on lofte.

12827. A paragraph mark before this *3it*; it seems to have its right place before the *3it* of l. 12835.

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3it whanne these barouns out of sorhant were gon,
thanne lefte kyng Vryens behinde hem Echon,
and sent his gold jnto Eche contre
aftyr sowdiours ful gret plente;
so that viij thousend to him comen ful Ryht,
and jn the cyte viij thousend Redy to fyht.
For a sege there lay hem faste by
but on jorne thennes, Sekerly;
so that often they metten jn same
al on Ernest & not on game.
som tyme they wonne & losten also,
as the aventure torned bothe to & fro.
so that v 3er, whilles hit dede Endure,
was gret Meschef, j 3ow Ensure,
That othir levyng was not jn that contre
But as Ech of other Hyt tok, Sykerle,
the cristene of the hethene som on day,
& the hethen of cristene anothir, jn fay.
thus was distroyed that contre,
that pyte & Rewthe hit was to se.

(11) King Uriens, who remains at Sorhant, sends for plenty of soldiers.

In the neighbourhood, a town is besieged.

They fight with varying success,

[leaf 137 *b*]

constantly snatching the food from each other.—

Jn this Manere the werre dyd laste,
that ech a3e*n*s o*þer* bekeryd ful faste.
thens torned the hethen from *þat* contre
jnto kyng Artheure*s* lond, certeinle.
And there diden they gret damage,
for there nas no*n* to lette*n* here owtrage,
but as it kam be aventure,
as gret god wolde, j 3ow Ensure,
bothe faire & good of sqwyers 3onge,
as goode as myhte ben Rehersed *with* tonge,
that kepten ful wel that ylke lond,
tyl kyng Arthewr cam hom, 3e vndirstond.
and now scholen heren More of this,
how kyng Arthours lond was kept, j-wis.

Eventually the heathen invade Arthur's land,

where an encounter with the young squires,

and with king Arthur, is in store for them.

Now telleth this tale 3it furthermore:
whanne that Galachim herde tellen thore,

Chap. XIII.

12843. Abbreviation mark in darker ink.

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Galachim sends a messenger to his cousins to ask for a private meeting (cf. ll. 12319 ff.).

he took a Messenger Ryht anon,
and to Gaweyn he sent him ful son,
that previliche to-gederis scholden they Mete
jn a certeyn forest, & not to lete,
and his bretheryn with him to brynge,
and that he Make non Taryenge,
but on the morwe next Pask day
there forto Meten with-owten delay.

The messenger arrives in Orkney,

the Messenger Rod bothe day & Nyht,
tyl jnto orkanye jn wales he kam ful Ryht,

and delivers his message,

and dide his arende *þere* Ryht anon
To Gaweyn & to his bretherin echon,
and seide that—"Galachim sente 3ow to say

fixing day and place.

with him to Mete*n* swich a certein day
jn the forest of Brokelond
at swich a place, 3e vndirstond.
For *þer*e sekerly he wyl 3ow abyde,
3if he be heyl, what so be-tyde."

They gladly promise to come,

wha*n*ne that they herden this Messeng*er*e,
gret joye they Maden amonge*s* hem there,
and seiden, with-owte*n* ony lettyng
they wolden ben there be *þe* day spring.
for som Nede *þer* was, they wiste*n* trewelye,
that they were aftir sent jn so gret hye.

and reward the messenger,

tha*n*ne to this Messenger they 3oven a steede
and o*þer* gret 3iftes to his Meede.

who speedily returns home.

tha*n*ne spared the Messeng*er* ne*þer* hors ne Man,
tyl that to Galachim ful sone he Cam,
that jn that place abod stylle there
of his cosynes to heren answere.

Wha*n*ne that this Messeng*er* was come*n* ageyn,

Galachim, on hearing the answer of his cousins,

to his lord Galachim he seide, ful pleyn,
the answere of his cosines dere
and that they gretten him al jn fere.
"and aftyr Pask the thrydde day
they scholen there 3ow mete*n*, *with*-owte*n* delay."

gets ready,

tha*n*ne ordeyned him fast this Galachym

12897. MS. *meſſeng* with an *cs*-mark at the end and an *er*-mark above it.

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and other certein Meyne with hym,
& Ryden forth to þe forest of Brokelond.
but 3it weren they not comen, j vndirstond,
But Abod Galachym there Stylle,
tyl that they comen at here owne wylle.
whanne Gaweyn and his bretherin comen were,
Gret joye amonges hem was thanne there.
thanne Gaweyn to Galachym spak vnto:
"cosin, for me 3e sente," he seide tho,
"lo, my bretheren and j jn fere
be comen to knowen 3oure wille here,
and elles j ne hadde comen at this tyde,
For into oþer contres we casten to Ryde,
and þerfore we comen to taken oure leve,
For vs were loth 3ow forto greve."
"whider wolde 3e riden?" quod Galachim tho,
"with-owten Me 3e owhten not to do.
þerfore j preye 3ow that 3e me telle
jnto what contreward 3e ben so snelle.
and aftyr j schal tellen 3ow my wyl,
3if that 3e welen owht assentyn þertyl."
"Cosin Galachim, wilen 3e vndirstonde me,
of merveillous thinges j schal tellen the:
of the largete and of the prowesse,
of the fre herte, deboneure, & swetnesse,
and of the worthyest knyht þat in þe world is,
of whom that j haue herd tydynges, j-wys."
"A god Mercy," quod Galachim tho,
"leve cosyn Gawayn, ho tolde 3ow so?
For that same cause for 3ow j sente,
as j 3ow now seye veramente."
"Forsothe," quod Gaweyn thanne ageyn,
"his Name owhte to ben knowen ful pleyn.
For his name hiht Artheur the kyng,
the best body that day may be spryng;
and 3oure oncle and Myn he is
and þerto the worthiest kyng of pris
& Ek þerto oure kyng with Ryht,

12908 and rides to the meeting-place.

[leaf 137 c]

12912 Gawein and his brothers arrive.

Gawein says: "You have
12916 sent for us.

Here we are, to know your will.

12920 Then we will go into other countries."

Galachin asks where
12924 they want to go.

12928 Gawein replies by extolling the worthiest knight in the world.

12932

Galachin exclaims: "For the
12936 same reason I sent for you!"

Gawein continues: "His
12940 name is Arthur.

He is our uncle

12944 and our rightful king.

12940. *owhte*, *h* squeezed in afterwards.
12941. *hiht* corrected from *hit*.

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The barons oppose him unjustly.
& *with* wrong þe barou*n*s a3ens him go*n*ne fyht.
for weteth wel," quod Gaweyn, "Sekerlye,
I will be made a knight only by him."
that knyht j wele ben Mad of his bodye
and neu*er*e Er armes to bere,
certein, Galachim, j 3ow swere."

Galachim is delighted,
Wha*n*ne that Galachym vndirstood al this,
his herte was ful of joye and blys,
and they all rejoice.
and als mochel joye to-gederis they Made
as thouh alle the world they hade,
and told hym þ*a*t for non othyr thyng
for hym he sente, *with*-owte*n* lesyng.
They tell each other of their mother's words.
Ek he told hym al jn fere
hou it kam be talkyng of his Modir dere.
tha*n*ne to Galachim spak Gaweyn þe bolde:
"Ryght Evene the same my Modir me tolde."
and wha*n*ne that thus they hadde*n* spoken jn fere,
Then after agreeing to meet again in a fortnight,
anon they acordyd tha*n*ne Ryht there
wha*n*ne they wolden taken here jorne:
with-jnne xv dayes, ful Sykerle.
they ride home to equip themselves.
tha*n*ne wenten they forth Ech jn his way
hem forto purveyen alle Mane*r* aray,
as behouede to swyche children so goode,
that come*n* were*n* of so hygh a blode.
tha*n*ne Rod forth Galachym anon Ryht
hym forto ordeyne with al his Myht,
Galachim musters 200 well-armed warriors.
tyl ij c. of knyhtes & sqwyers had he
ful wel j-harneised jn alle degre,
of the beste that he cowde chese,
for be his wyl he wolde non lese.

He leaves home without telling his father.
And thus wente he *pr*evyly forth his way,
that non word to his fadir wolde he say.
[leaf 137 *d*]
And streyht to Brokelond tha*n*ne Rydeth He,
and there abydeth with his Meyne,
Tyl Gawein & his bretherin come*n* were;
this Galachim abod hem Ryht There.
His cousins
For they hem purchased on here syde

12977. MS. *Rydeht.*

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v. .c. men with hem to ryde — have 500 noble followers,
what of worthy knyhtes & of sqwiere
wel j-horsed & harneysed al jn fere,
and lordis children weren they alle
and þe most part knyhtes, as hit gan falle. — mostly knights.
but of Galachymmes meyne
nere but xx knyhtes, certeinle.
whanne they to-gederis weren j-met, — When they all meet,
there was gret joye, with-owten let. — there is great joy.
thanne conseilled they to-gederis tho
jnto what partye they wolden go.
thanne acorded they everichon — They decide to go to London.
that to Londone in breteine þey wolden gon,
the chyef cyte of Artheur the kyng;
For þere scholden þey sonnest heren tydyng
bope of the kyng and þe hethene also,
that jn that contre dide mochel wo.

Now, as ȝe me heren bope reden & say,
jn the begynneng of the mounthe of may, — In the lovely month of May,
whanne trees & medwes wexen grene
and faire flowres growen hem be-twene,
ek also Bryddis merly don Synge,
also swete dewes jn the mornenge,
and also hertes lyhtenen be kynde,
ek thanne is meryc vnder wode lynde,
thanne thouhte Gaweyn & Galachim, — Gawein and his cousins
Galheris & gwerrers, & mo with hym, — start on their
and Agrevayn jn here compenye: — journey,
faste to ryde gonne they hem hye,
whiles the morwenyng hit was cold;
they thowhten to ryden, þat weren so bold.
for they weren tendre and ȝong of age,
hardy, bold, & ful of corage, — full of courage and well armed.
and þerto j-armed wondirly wel
bothe jn erne and ek jn stel,
here swerdis hangyng on here sadelbowe,
and thus they reden al be rowe.
for jn þat contre was gret doute
of the hethene. that ryden aboute — For the land is infested by the heathen,

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who plunder everywhere.

bothe for pray and ek vytaylle;
alle that contre diden they asaille.
whiche contre so ful of good hit was,
whanne they entrede jnto that plas,
that gret deol hit is to here
what distroccioun they maden there.

On the third day, they meet four viking kings,

[leaf 138 a]

The thridde day whanne they gonne ryde,
ȝe scholen here what hem gan be-tyde:
they metten kyng leodegron, verament,
Kyng Sonygron, And Kyng Mandelent,
Therto kyng Sernagn jn compeyne,
that hadde distroyed al that contre;

with immense booty

For thens they ladden many gret praye
of wyn, flesch, vytaille, The sothe to saye;
and the portis weren aryved with Marchaundise,
the ryalest that ony man cowde devyse,

laden on horses and vehicles.

that v hundred somers weren charged there,
xv chares, & ten .c. charyettes jn Fere.
this cariage so wondir gret hit was,

There is blinding dust,

that the powdir ros wondirly jn that plas,
that onnethes ony other myhte se
For dowst, that was so gret plente,

fire, and smoke,

therto the Fyr & smoke so strong also,
that non man myhte sen where oþer gan go.

and the poor people bewail their losses.

whanne these ȝonge children herden the cry
of the powre peple that cam hem by
For the harm that the hethen hadden do,
of whom ther weren ten thousend & mo
with-owten hem that weren on foote,
that both robbed & brende, god hit wote—

The young squires ask for king Arthur.

Whanne the children this dolour Sye
of that poure peple to-forn here eye,
they axeden where kyng Arthour was.

The people answer: "He must have gone to Tarmelide.

they ne wiste, they seide, jn non cas—
" but he be jnto the lond of Tarmelyde,

13029. *kīyg*, *g* squeezed in afterwards.
13038, 13039. *.c.* and *so* added above the line.
13047. The second *the* corrected from *he*.

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as we suppose this jlke tyde.
but ȝit ER that he forth wente,
alle his strengthes he stuffyd, veramente,
that non of these hethen harm MAY hem do,
and therfore, Sekyr, they ben ful wo,
and therfore they distroye this contre
thus al abowtes, as ȝe MOWNE Se."
whanne that the children herden this,
that kyng Artheur was owte of lond, j-wis,
they wolden chalangen bothe lond & pray
that the hethene hadden forreyed that day,
and kepen that lond jnto his comeng,
that was bothe here vncle & kyng.
whanne that these passantes herde hem so say,
thanne of on thing they gonne hem pray:
to tellen what maner of MEN they were.
"his kynnes-MEN we ben MANY of vs here."
and whanne the passantes herden this,
Ful mochel joye they MADEN, j-wys,
For his kynnesmen, they gonne vndirstond,
Scholde sosteine & kepen kyng Artheurs lond.
whanne that the children al this beheld
how thikke the careage kam ouer the feld,
here hertes gonnen to RYSEN anone,
and as armes they cryden thus sone.
"NOW let sen here, worthy sqwyers,
whiche of vs schal ben most bold & fers
here to defenden oure herytage,
jn whiche these paynemis don gret owtrage."

But before that, he equipped his strongholds,

and now the heathen plunder in the country."

The squires decide to challenge both land and spoil.

The peasants find out who the young men are,

and are glad of their help.

Thussone to armes went EVERY MAN
and to hors-bak hos cowde sonnest than.
whanne the passantȝ Sien they hadden socour,
they torned aȝen with-owten dolour;
bothe on hors and EK on foote
with these children they wenten foot hote,
and the ferste thing was, that they METTE,
chariettis with vitailles, with-owten lette,

They ride against the enemy,

followed by the peasants.

First they meet a number of carts

13057. *forth*, *h* added afterwards.
13078. *Careage*, the first *e* corrected from *a*.

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that they ladden toward here ost
conducted by 3000 heathen. with thre thousend Paynemis of gret bost.
and hit was passed the Mydday,
as this storye here doth say, 13096
It is a very hot day. Ek wondir hot hit was tho Ryht
both for sqwyer and Ek for knyht.
Anon as þe chyldren here Enemyes Sye,
a3ens hem faste gonnen they hye, 13100
[leaf 138 b] Also Faste As they Myhten Ryde;
The squires attack and slay the heathen; with here Enemye they metten that tyde,
and theke tyme slowen doun Ryht Euerichon,
that thike tyme from hem paste not on. 13104
Gawein, thike day be Gaweyn so Manye weren ded,
that body & hors weren al blood Red.
For a3ens the ax that he bar on hond,
there myhte non Man his dynt with-stond. 13108
his brothers, Eke his other bretheryn dyden wel tho,
For they slowen that day Mani a fo.
and Galachim doing wonders, and Galachyn with gawayn Evere was,
that Mani Merveilles wrowh jn that plas; 13112
For al that Euere stood jn his weye,
he slowh down Ryht, as j 3ow seye.
more particularly Gawein. but of þe Marterdom þat Made gaweyn,
hit is wondir to tellen, jn certeyn; 13116
For a3ens his strok wolde nowht abyde
Nethir harneys ne Man that ilke tyde.
So fowhten the children that jlke day
with hem þat ladden that Jlke pray, 13120
Only twenty heathen escape; that there ne sckaped but xx Men,
of whiche 3it there weren ten
ten of them reach the 7000 men who come marching behind. that Retorned to hem that comen behynde,
of hem socour 3if they myhten fynde; 13124
of wheche vij thousend fully there were,
Many of these carry no arms on account of the heat. but alle wel armed weren they not there,
for hit was trossed hem be-Fore
among the chariettis that wenten thore: 13128
For the gret hete that was thanne,
onharmed ther Rod ful Mani a Manne.

13094. *bost*, *t* through correction.
13115. *Made*, *d* through correction.

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whanne these ten fugytyves comen ageyn
to tho vij thousend, they tolden hem pleyn
how that alle jslayn they were
that here cariage cowndyet there.

The fugitives tell of their defeat.

Whanne that the hethin vndirstodyn al this,
anon to here armes they wenten, j-wis;
thike that ony armure hadden tho,
dyden as wel as they myhten do.
so that the thridde partye there
of armure destitewd they were,
whiche jn chareettis was trossed be-fore,
þat these ȝong sqwyers hadde wonnen thore;
whiche to Londone they senten, with-owten let,
be theke passauntes that with hem met,
and let coundie hem be anothir way,
lest þat these hethene scholde hem betray.
and sethen they seweden forth the chas,
til that they comen jnto that plas
there as thei to-gederis mette,
bothe hethen & cristen, with-owte lette.
thanne there began ful gret bataylle.
For there slowhe caweyn, with-owten faille,
kyng Noas the Brun of yrlond.
his strokis weren sweche, ȝe vndirstond,
that with his ax he clef him vnto,
that asondir fyl his Body tho.
Galachim so smot tho kyng Sonigran,
that jnto the feld his hed fley than;
for so took Galachim there vppon,
that his strok dorste abyden non.
And Gaheries chased kyng Gwyneband
the drawht of an archier, j vndirstand.
for he hadde beten his brothir Gwerrers,
þerfore jn herte he was ful fers.
(with a spere Gwineband him smot, sikerle,
wherfore Gaheries wende ded he hadde be;
but Gwerrers harm cawhte non

Those who have their weapons at hand, get ready.

But the third part have their armour lying on the carts

now seized by the squires and sent off to London.

The squires, in pursuit of the fugitives, fall upon the heathen force.

Gawein cleaves the body of one of their kings,

Galachim cuts off the head of another,

Gaheries chases a third, Guinebant,

who has hit Guerrers with a spear.

(That Guerrers was unhurt,

13152. *ffor*, *ff* through correction. 13160. *ſtrok*, *k* blotted.
13161. *Gwyneband*, *d* corrected from *t*.

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that ilke tyme of his fon; 13168
Gaheries did not know.) but that wiste not the sothe Gaheries.)
So forth he prekede jn that pres
with his swerd j-drawen on hande,
as faste as the hors myhte fleande. 13172

[leaf 138 *c*] Whanne Gwynebant Gaheryet tho beheld,
Guinebant flees in terror. that he cam so prekyng jn the feld,
he fledde faste from hym a-way
For drede of deth he hadde sein that day. 13176
(For Gaheries has that day made almost as great havoc as Gawein. (For he was of Merveillous prowesse,
and that day Nygh dede as gret dystresse
jnto litel partye as dyde Gawayn,
and al the sothe now Scholde j sayn. 13180
He has sworn an oath thanne swor Gaheriet anon there
be God & be his blessed modir dere
that ȝif euere he myhte armes welde
to ben a knyht and beryn a schelde, 13184
never to rest, that he scholde neuere jn place abyde
Nethir day ne Nyht, that he nolde Ryde
till he has avenged his brother's death.) vppon the hethen, avenged til that he be
of his brotheris deth, ful certeinle. 13188
For he wende Gwerres hadde ben dede
Ful Sekerly there jn that Stede.)
Gaheries overtakes Guinebant. and Euere he sewed forth ful faste,
tyl he ouergat him at the laste. 13192
Behind him are the heathen men. So that behindes him weren the hethen Men
an arblastes, j wot wel then.
thanne swed hym Gwynebantes Meyne,
that from that bataylle gonnen they fle. 13196

So that to-gederis they metten jn fere,
Gaheries fells his foe, that Gaheriet so smot Gwynebant there
thorwh the helm (ful Sone hit Glod)
that down he fyl with-oute ony abod. 13200
So that the Ryht qwarter fley away
jnto the Feld that same day.
and wants to return. thanne torned Gaheriet his hors hed,

13176. MS. *thay day.* 13184. *and*, *d* corrected from *b*.
13200. *oute* added above the line.

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and was ful joyful jn that sted,
that he hadde venged his brothers deth;
So that to his compenye forward he goth.
ȝit this Gwynebant, as he lay,
Cryde and made ful gret deray.
So that to him they comen be eche partie,
als so faste as they myhte flye,
and with here Gleyves comen Gaheryet aboute,
both hym & his hors jn that Rowte.
to the Erthe down they there bar
bothe Gaheryet and his hors Ryht thar
and his hors they Slowen vndyr hym.
than wax Gaheries wondir Grym,
and vppon his feet he stirte ful blyve,
as Man that thowhte to Saven his lyve.
and so he besterid jn that plas,
that there non of hem so hardy was
ones to leggen vppon hym ony hand.
therfore otherwyse they gonne fand:
with longe speris & swerdis bothe
and with al manere of scharpe knyves, forsothe,
that ij or iij on knes was he browht;
So that longe Enduren myhte he there nowht
but ȝif that he were taken or ded;
he myhte not flen owt of that sted.
thanne was there a sqwier, that him say pace
to purswen Gwynehant jn that place,
kam wringeng his handis with hevy chere,
and al to-tar & For-drowh his here.
thanne to Gaweyn streyht gan he go,
that Gwerriers hadde j-Rered & horsed tho
vppon kyng Sernagnes hors,
that this sqwier wan with gret fors.

Whanne this sqwier Gaweyn Say tho,
ful lowde he cryde: "what thenke ȝe do?

But Guinebant cries murder,
and Gaheries is soon surrounded,
and thrown to the ground.
He leaps to his feet,
and defends himself.
They attack him with long spears, swords, and knives.
His situation is desperate.
Now a squire, seeing the danger,
hastens to Gawein, who has just helped Guerrers to a horse.
He cries: "What are you thinking of?

13206. The scribe omitted this line; in writing it afterwards up the right margin, he again left out *compenye*, which was ultimately inserted above (*i. e.* to the left of) the (vertical) line.
13211. *aboute*, *b* corrected from *d*.

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Your brother Gaheries is lost, unless he gets speedy help.

ȝe han lost gaheriet, ȝoure brothir dere,
but he som socour the sonnere haue here,
For a cursed hethene he chasede ful blyve,
where-thorwh j trowe he hath lost his lyve.
[leaf 138 *d*] For the Hethen He Beet down to grownde,
He chased and felled a heathen, but was pursued, and lies beaten in yon dark valley!"
but the paynemys sewed jn that stounde,
and ȝondir jn ȝone dyrke valeye
there lyth gaheriet beten, with-outen delaye.
For passing gret los it now were
thus forto lesen ȝoure brothir dere."

Gawein prays to God and the Virgin that he may not lose his brother,

whanne that gaweyn herde of this tydyng,
anon he preide to hevene kyng
and to blessid marye, his modir jn fere,
that he scholde not lesen his brother dere.

for if he does, he will never be glad,

"For ȝif j hym lese jn this degre,
joyful jn herte schal j thanne neuere be;

nor fight again.

and ȝif j thus lese hym jn this feld,
abowtes my nekke neuer hangen schal scheld!"

He lets the squire indicate the spot,

Anon of the esqwier axede he
jn what partye that he myhte be.
thanne he him tolde: "jn ȝone valeye
vndir ȝone wode, as j ȝow seye."

and calls on his men to follow.

thanne ȝonge gaweyn ascryed anon
that his meyne scholde with hym gon.

Galachim says: "We have laboured hard to-day, and must labour harder still!"

"leve cosyn," quod galachim tho,
"For this nede whom somone ȝe so?
we han laboured Sore this day,
and ȝit we mosten sorrer, jn fay."

Gawein takes the lead, as swift as an arrow,

So that they disrenged þere anon,
and to-forn hem alle gaweyn gan gon.
and also faste he gan forth to ryde
as qwarel of arblast doth owt glyde,
with a ryht good ax jn his hond.

and works his way

and swich martirdom he made, j vndirstond,
that thus they Slowen bothe to & fro
a myle wey, er gaheriet they comen to.

to Gaheries.

and atte laste gaheriet they fownde

13257. *axede*, *a* through correction.
13259. MS. *than* with an abbreviation stroke over *an*.
13267. MS. *difregend*.

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liggende ful plat to the grownde.
(his helm they token of jn that sted,
for they wolden han smeten of his hed.
but they bethouhten hem also blyve,
that they wolden han taken hym on lyve,
and sende him forth to kyng Bernage,
on of the hethene ful of corage.
thanne torned they gaheriet þere anon
to bynden his hondis behinde his bakbon.)
thanne cam gawein rydyng ful faste,
whiles ony breth on him myhte laste,
with a myhty ax beryng on honde;
there-with the hethen he thouhte don schonde.
whanne so with his brothir they token vppon,
he thowhte of hem to sparen not on.
Thanne on bothe Sydes he gan on leye,
that wondir hit is al forto seye,
that non man dorst his strok abyde.
thanne behelden they that ylke tyde
that his brothir helden hem be-twene,
For swiche strokes hadde they non sene.
So that non lengere wolde they him kepe,
but ȝif to the deth that they wolde lepe.
whanne Gaheriet say his brothir gawayn,
tho vp he Stirte and was ful fayn,
and cast his helm vppon his hed
ful rediliche jn that sted
and took his swerd & fawht ful faste.
ek Agrevayn his brothir he spide atte laste,
that him an hors þere browht jn hyghe
and seide: "gaheriet brothir, trewely,
worth vp faste vppon þis stede.
For ȝe ben to blame, so god me spede,
so fer from ȝoure felawes forto gon;
So myhten ȝe han lost ȝoure lif anon.
Anon as gaheriet to hors was dyht,
the bretheren semblede with al here myht,

Gaheries is lying on the ground. The heathen have taken off his helm,

and want to bind his hands behind his back.

Gawein breathes vengeance.

He attacks the heathen.

These must desist,

and Gaheries jumps to his feet.

Agrevain brings him a horse,

and chides him for his foolhardiness.

13276. *Grownde*, *wn* on erasure.
13280. *hȳ*, *y* corrected from *e*. 13281. *fende* *d* corrected from *t*.
13307. þ squeezed in afterwards. 13312. MS. *alher'*.

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The squires collect their forces;

and gadered here peple to-gedere jn same,
For hem was comeng mochel grame.
[leaf 139 a] For the Hethen Wente Faste Abowte
so do the heathen. here batailles to gaderen jn-to a rowte.
Now let vs resten of this Talkyng
bothe of the hethene and þe children so ȝyng.
And of the passauntes let vs now talke,
that with the cariage to Londone gonne walke.

In the meantime, the peasants hurry on to London with the booty,

Now reherseth forth here this Storye,
that the passauntes gonnen faste hem hye,
as men joyful and glad they were
that the cyte they hadde aprochyd so nere,
For but fowre myles they weren thens;
anxious to bring it into a safe place. and amongȝes hem but lytel defens,
wherfore they hyed hem wondir faste,
tyl jnto þe cyte that they weren paste.
for they wisten wel, the hethene wolden asaye
ȝif they myhte geten aȝen that praye.
The citizens are amazed at the sight, whanne they of the cyte behelden that Syht,
Sore jn here hertis they weren afryht
of that good & of that richesse
that thike meyne browhte, with-outen distresse.
and ask who have wrought such a brave work. The cetezeins axeden the passauntis sone
ho that al that prowesse hadde done.
The peasants answer: "Gawein, his brothers, they seiden that—"gaweyn, kyng Lothis son.
his bretherin & cosines jn viron,
Galheriet, gwerres, & Agrevayn,
and their cousin Galachim; and galachim here cosyne, jn certayn,
kyng newtres sone, as j ȝow telle,
with the hethene they fyhten ful felle,
they have left their own lands to help king Arthur. and leven Londis, richesse, & alle thyng,
and comen to helpen Artheur oure kyng;
that neuere for joye neþer for wrake
oure kyng Artheur nilen not forsake;
With 700 men against 3000 they have won this. but vij hundred felawes in compenye
aȝens iij thousend this wonnen they, trewlye,
and hem they slowen everychon;
that so with this pray gonne we gon.

13339. *Agrevayn*, *r* corrected from *y*.

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and now they fyhten with vij thousend Mo,
that this cariage purswede tho.
Openeth the 3ates, this good 3e take,
and som Rescus for hem 3e Make;
For hit were bothe Rewthe and pyte
but 3if that they Reskwed now be."

Now they are fighting against 7000.
Open the gates, take these goods, and send them some help!"

Whanne the cete3eins vndirstodyn this,
anon the 3ates thei opened, j-wys,
and Resceyved jn that Tresor,
that the passauntes browhten thor.
and sethen a Meyne, with-owten lesyng,
scholde gon the children jn socouryng.
anon to þe Maister tour they wente,
and an horn they blewen þere, veramente.
thanne was þere the custum tho
that eche man thanne to armes scholde go.
So that there Weren Redy Anon Ryht
Sevene thousend men j-armed to fyht.
thanne seide the captein of that town
that hit Nere non good Resown—
"that Manye hens scholde go,
what Maner of Nede we han hem to.
and þerfore me thinketh best hit were
that somme of hem abyde how here."
so of þat Meyne v thousend forth wente,
and the Remenant to þe cite weren sente.

Then the gates are opened,
the goods received,
and the fighting men summoned by means of a horn blast from the chief tower.
[leaf 139 *b*]
7000 men assemble; the captain (Doon of Cardiff) wants to leave some in the town;
he takes 5000 men with him.

Thus pasten they forth be dalk and dale
tyl that they comen jnto the vale
where as they fowhten sore jn fere
and be þat tyme vij thousand newe hethen comen were,
and whanne they were comen to þat gaderyng,
they preisede here felawes Ryht non thing,
that a3ens so lytel a Meyne
so longe to holden ony chawd melle.
"for but 3onge berdles boyes they ben,

They march towards the place of battle.
Meanwhile, 7000 more heathen have arrived; these blame their comrades for fighting so long against "beardless boys."

13358. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.
13371. *henf* corrected from *hennef*.
13385. *boyef*, *f* squeezed in afterwards.

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a small force only.

but iiij xx knyhtes, as j kan sen,
and but v. hundred of sqwyers,
that nethir ne semen prowd ne fers,
and xx that not dubbed ne be,
and iij c besides thanne, Sykerle."

The chieftains of the heathen, Medelans (Mandelent) and Guinehans (Guinehant, -haut), have their forces divided in two brigades.

but the hethene Gouernours that þere were,
Medelans & Guinechans bothe jn fere,
hadden departyd here Meyne
jnto tweyne bataylles, Sykerle;
and jn Every bataylle iiij thouse[n]d was
of tho hethene jn that plas.

Guinehans rides forward;

So that this Guinehans cam forth be-fore
with a strong spere jn his handis thore;

so does Gawein.

and Gawayn, that to-fore alle oþer was
with his ax on honde jn that plas,
and boldeliche he Rod him to Mete;
for non maner of thing he wolde not lete.

They meet.

this Guinehant with his spores his hors tho smot,
& Mette with Gaweyn anon foot hot,

Guinehant breaks his spear on Gawein.

and azens the brest Smot him so sore,
that al on peces the spere fleygh thore.
for his hauberk was strong jnowgh,
of double Mayl bothe good & towgh,
and him-Self a worthy Bacheler,
that on Enche wolde not Remeven ther
for non strok that he cowde Sette.

Gawein hits him on the helmet,

that ȝonge gaweyn ne did him lette,
but to hym he Rawhte ful Ryht
with his ax so trenchaunt as Man of Myht.
vppon his helm he smot him so,

and throws him to the ground.

that Top ouer tail he gan to go,
and with that his hors fyl to grownde,
and this was don jn a lytel stownde.

The heathen are amazed.

Whanne that the hethene behelden this,
of that strok they Merveilleden, j-wys,

13389. *not*, *t* blotted. 13395. MS. *thouſed*.
13403. *horſ* added in the right margin.
13405. *Smot*, *S* daubed.
13413. *ful* twice, the former crossed out.

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For they wende here king ded hadde be;
hym to socouren faste gonne they fle. — They hasten to his assistance,
and Gaweyn amonges hem gan to Ryde,
and they with him fowhten on ech syde, 13424
and with here gleyves slowen his destrer — and kill Gawein's horse.
betwene his thyes, as he Rod ther.
thanne thussone he was on foote
bothe angry & fers & of herte ful hoote, 13428
and on bothe sydes he leyde so vppon, — But Gawein keeps them at bay.
that of hem dorste neghen hym non.
thanne cam socour hym abowte, — He gets help.
so þat þere was strong fyht, with-owten dowte, 13432
abowtes gawayn jn that stounde,
and euere lay kyng Guinehans atte grounde.
For the hethene jn dowte were — The heathen do not know whether to assist Guine-
whethir to reren guinehant they scholden gon þere 13436
Owther Abowtes Gawayn forto Abyde; — [leaf 139 c] hant, or turn on Gawein.
thus jn dowte they weren that Tyde.
but Gawayns felawes Fowhten there sore,
and the Melle wax hard Evere More & More. 13440

Whanne Gawayn wist where-abowtes they were, — Gawein, in danger of being taken,
that they wolde taken him presonere
& an hethen hadde smeten his broþer Agrevayn,
wherfore he was sory, in certayn, 13444
and stirte him forth jn al that pres — makes a rush into the press,
with his ax on honde (he wolde not ses),
and lifte vp his ax þere on hy,
þat he thethen to han Smeten, trewly. 13448
this hethen ne myhte not wel asterte,
but caste vp his Scheld also smerte;
& with his ax he smot hit on peces two, — cuts through a heathen's shield,
that jnto þe feld they flowen tho. 13452
the strok vppon þe left scholder alyhte,
and down to þe girdyl he clef him down ryhte, — cleaves him to the girdle,
that down to þe Erthe he fyl anon,
and Gaweyn his hors took ful son. 13456 — and throws himself on his horse.
thanne vp he stirte jn ryht gret haste,

13430. *hym*, MS. *hym*.
13442. *they*, *y* squeezed in afterwards.

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Encouraging his comrades,

anon to his Felawes he ascriede wel faste:
"let se, Eche Man prove his prowesse,
that with vs here ben, more oper lasse.
For now scholen ȝe sen þat bothe my strokes & myht
this oure ben doubled, j ȝow plyht."

he plunges into fresh combats.

thanne amonges the hethene gan he Ryde,
and gret Martirdom he mad that tyde,
that the pecis flowen jn-to the feld
as wel of Mennes bodies as of scheld.

By this time Guinehans is put on horseback;

be that tyme Guinehans was vp set
To asayen ȝif he cowde don ony bet.
he took a stowt lawnce, jn certeyn,

he rides against Agrevain,

and faste he Rod aȝens Agreveyn,
that his owne cosin hadde j-slayn
be-forn his owne Eyen, certayn.
So aȝens him he Rod with Mayn & Myht,

and throws him to the ground.

and sire Agrevaynes he smot ful Ryht,
that hors & Man to grownde he wente;
thanne wenden his bretheryn he hadde be schente.

There goes a chill through the hearts of the friends.

Whanne Gaheriet & galachim this gonne beholde,
jn here hertes they woxen ful colde,
for siker they wenden he hadde be de[d];
him to Reskwe they wente jn þat sted.

Galachim strikes Guinehant on the helm,

Galachym was þe ferste tho
þat to Guinehant gan forto go,
& vppon the helm so hym smot,
that his bak bowede anon fot hot;

Guerrers wounds him in the arm,

and Guerreiers smot him thorgwh the arm
(ȝit ere he wente, hadde he more harm),

and Gaheries cuts off his head.

and Gaheriet betwene þe nekke & þe scholder bon,
that jnto þe feld þe hed flygh anon;
and Galachim with his foot that stounde
threw down þe Body to the grownde,

Galachim takes the horse to Agrevain.

and took his hors & ladde to Agrevayn,
that on foote fawht with strengthe & Mayn.
and whanne Agrevayn was vpe j-dyht,

13460 13464 13468 13472 13476 13480 13484 13488 13492

13479. MS. *be de.*
13486. This line was omitted and then written up the right margin.

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thanne begynne there wondir gret fyht.
but of gaweyn wiste they non thing,
for he was ful harde in bekering
amonges the hethene vndir the lynde;
so fer hit was, he was harde to fynde.

Gawein is fighting farther off.

whanne the hethen saw that Gwinehaut
was so ded thorwh his owne defaut,
they torned faste anon to flyht.
to kyng Mandelentes ost þey wenten ful tyht,
that was here chief Gouernour;
to him they wenten for socour.

The heathen, seeing Guinehaut (Guinehame) killed, flee to Mandelent (Medelane).

Thanne Gaweyn, that Was So fer Jn gon,
whanne tydinges of his bretheren herde he non,
he wende discomfit that they hadde be,
and gan to withdrawen him, certeinle.
hym thowhte he say his bretherin comenge,
which to his herte was gret lyhtynge,
and toward Gawayn they comen that Res,
but they ne myhte him neighen for pres.
for kyng Mandelent hadde gret plente,
bet than vij thousend hethen, Sykerle,
and þat causede that 3onge Gawayn
to his feleschepe miht not come, certayn,
whiche that were Ryht gret pite
for alle Breteyne, Sykerle.

[leaf 139 *d*]

Gawein, hearing nothing from his brothers, begins to retreat.

Then he sees the brothers coming,

but Mandelent's brigade stands between.

be that tyme weren they of londone there
with v thousend wel armed jn fere.
whanne the children behelden that siht,
and þat here banere was displaied ful Ryht,
and knewen hem that wenten hem fro
with þe cariage to Londone forto go
and boden hem to ben lyht of herte—
"for socour 3ow cometh also smarte."

By this time, the 5000 Londoners appear.

The young squires recognize them,

Whanne that the children wisten this,
that they weren of Londone, j-wis,
jn herte they hadden Ryht gret joye,

and rejoice.

13496. *was*, *s* through correction. 13510. MS. *lyhtyñge*.
13518. *Breteyne*, *B* corrected from *g*.

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For þe lasse the hethen hem scholde anoye.
They attack afresh; they torned here hors al jn fere,
& vppon þe hethen they Ryden jn there.
but thanne weren the hethen sory,
For kyng Guinehaut lay ded hem by.
thussone they gonnen Medlen sone;
thanne was þer not a litel to done.
spears are broken, here speres schatered jn þe feld,
& Many hethen ded vndir his scheld.
And whanne here speris to-broken were,
swords are drawn, Eche man to his swerd took there.
So ech with-jnne oþer gan to Ryde,
So that gret bataylle was þat tyde.
bothe of hors & Ek of Men
and much blood is shed. ful strong bloodsched was þere then,
that it Ran down be Eche vale,
as here Reherseth this ylke tale;
þerto þe dost so gret hit was,
onnethis ony oþer knew jn þat plas.

The furious battle Ful strong was þanne that Melle
of the children and [hem] of Londone, as ȝe mown se,
aȝens tho cursed hethen wyhtes,
that so longe Endured jn fyhtes.
lasts until evensong. From Morwen jnto Evensong belle,
so longe they fowhten, as j ȝow telle.
There dede Gaweyn worthy prowesse
amonges the hethene jn that presse,
Gawein meets with Mandelent, thanne Mette with kyng Mandelent;
with him to fyhte hadde he good Entent.
who has struck one of his kin, For he hadde smyten on of his kyn,
þerfore he thowhte to meten with hym.
Doon of Cardiff. Doon of kerdyf was his name;
a man he was of ful good fame.
to þe Erthe he hadde him browht,
whiche þat Gaweyn ful sone him sowht.

13532. *there*, *th* on erasure (probably *f* was erased).
13545. *that it Ran*, the second *t* and *an* blotted.
13550. MS. *and of Londoñ*.
13557. *Mandelent*, *nt* corrected from *is*.
13564. *Gaweyn*, *G* corrected from *f*.

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he wolde han smeten of his hed,
but anoþer thowht gawayn jn þat sted.
Atte laste ȝit Gaweyn *with* Mandelent mette,
& on strok he on him sette; 13568 Mandelent falls.
thorwh his helm Ran Gaweyns dynt,
and at his teth þere hit stynt,
& he fil ded doun to þe grownde;
thanne sory weren þe hethen þat stonde. 13572

Whanne the Hethene Behelden tho [leaf 140 *a*]
that kyng Mandelent was ded so, Then the heathen take fright,
Ful sore abassched alle they were,
So þat Echon they fledden there, 13576 and flee towards Vandobers, the besieged city.
and to Vandobers they gonne hem hye,
where as the Sege was, Sekerlye.
thanne began the chas ful strong They are pursued;
and ek gret dowst, þat Ros hem among, 13580
that non Man oþer myhte knowe,
Not þe fadyr the Sone jn that Rowe.
So that Sore was that Bataylle,
that jn thyke chas weren slayn, sauns faille, 13584 slain are
what be Gaweyn & his Felawis there
and with helpe of hem of londone jn fere—
xij thousend weren Slayn vpryht, 12000 men;
that onnethe of þat Meyne askapen nc'Myht 13588
Not thre thousend of al that Rowte; scarcely 3000 men escape.
So they were chased bothe jnne & owte.
thus the hethene weren scomfyt Echon,
& homward ful joyful þe children gonne gon 13592 The young squires return to London
To the cyte of londone ful Rapelye;
these children ful faste gonne hem hye.
with presoners and pray faste þedir they Ronne, 13595 with prisoners and booty.
with the goodis þat tofore tyme þe hethene hadden wonne.

Whanne that these children to Londone weren went,
Gret joye the cetezeins Maden, verament, The citizens of London are full of joy.
and to-forn hem they Browhten anon
alle the prayes that they hadden don. 13600
thanne to Gawayn seiden they there, They ask Gawein to act as chief lord
jn Maner as chef lord that he were,

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and distribute the goods.
that he scholde maken distribucioun
of this good there al Jn vyrown. 13604

But Gawein leaves it to Sir Doon of Cardiff,
Thanne answerede Sire gaweyn anon
that for non thing he nolde hit don.
" but let Sire doon of kerdyf cyte
departen hit as that he wyl for me. 13608

who knows the people.
For he knoweth bothe Poure & Riche
and aftir eche degre to departyn aliche.
þerfore at his wille hit Schal be do,
For of hit j wele Entermete no mo." 13612

The citizens praise Gawein's gentleness and modesty.
and whanne the cetezeines herden this,
Ful Mochel gaweyn they preiseden, j-wys,
and hym they lovedyn with stedfast herte,
For he was gentyl, debonewre, meek, & aperte. 13616
thus jn londone Restede that Meyne
with Mirthe, Joye, and Solempnite.

Now a whille Reste we of this Matere,

Now we will speak of king Arthur and his followers
and of kyng Artheur let vs speken here, 13620
of kyng Bors, and of kyng Ban,
that thike tyme weren ful worthi Men,
and also of here compenie tho,

in Tarmelide.
that jnto tarmelide with hem gonne go 13624
with kyng leodegam forto dwelle
jn Maner of Sowdiours, as j zow telle.

[leaf 140 b]

Chap. XIV.

Now Forthere to this Mater Let Vs pace,
zif that God wyle graunten vs grace, 13628

King Arthur, with Ban and Boors,
hou that Arthewr past owt of his lond
and with hym these kynges, ze vndirstond,
bothe kyng Ban and eke kyng Bors,
that weren Men of Myht and Fors; 13632
how that they Riden Jn here jorne,

arrives at Tartaise (Tornise)
Tyl to Tartaysse they comen alle thre,
where as lay kyng leodegan, j vndirstond,
that was a worthi man of his hond. 13636

on the eve of Palm-Sunday,
On palmes-sonne Eve jn gonnen they Ryde
and with hem Merlyn that jlke tyde.

Merlin riding in front.
there thus Merlyne Rod hem be-fore
on a fulfair stede to þe paleis thore, 13640

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where as was tho kyng leodegan,
that jn ful gret thowht was he than.
For kyng Ryowns hadde Entred his lond
with xv o*þer* kynges, j vndirstond,
and hym they hadden chaced so sore
and from place to place dryve*n* hym thore.
So that these kynges logged hem alle
a-Forn Neblaise cite, as gan be-falle,
which cite was Riche and plentevous
of Goodis & of vitaille delicious.
wherfore that tyme kyng Leodegan
jn herte was a ful hevy man,
For he Niste how Forto do,
Nethe*r* how his lond defenden hem fro
(For jn his Lond hadde he no*n* Meyne
that Sege to remeven, certeinle),
Ne how owt of his lond he myhte hem chace;
of whech*e* he axed counseyl jn that place
of knyhtes and of othere Mo,
that at thike tyme were*n* come*n* hym to.

King Leodegan is sitting sad in his palace.
For king Ryon has chased him from place to place.
His enemies are encamping at Neblaise,
and he does not know how to ward them off.
He is asking the advice of his counsellors.

Jn the Mene whyle, whiles here-of they speke,
kyng Arthewr and his compenie go*n*nen jn Reke,
and cam to-fore kyng leodegan,
that with his barowns cownseil held than.
be tweyne and tweyne they Entred tho,
and jnto his halle they Entreden so,
and Merlyne jn here compenye,
but xlij vndir alle, wi*th*-owte*n* lye.
Ful Richely vestured & arayed they were,
and alle Berdles bacheleris tha*n*ne jn fere
Sof þe two bretheren kynges þat there weren than,
kyng Boors of Gawnes and kyng Ban,
whiche that to-forn wenten tho;
and Merlyne þe Message þere gan do.
but alle the lordis þat with-jnne were,
of this peple hadden Merveil there.

Now Arthur and his companions enter the hall,
two and two,
being, apart from Merlin, 42 in number.
They are richly dressed, and all beardless youths except Ban and Boors.
The lords are surprised.

13641. *was*, *w* corrected from *t*.
13653. *fforto do* corrected from *to do*.
13660. *hym*, *y* corrected from *e*. 13661. MS. *Jnthe*.

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The strangers bow to the king;
and whanne they comen to-fore the kyng,
they hym obeyeden jn worscheping.
he rises.
Anon the kyng Ros hem ageyn,
as this storye Reporteth certeyn,
For they semeden ful worthy Men
be here aray that they hadden then.
Thus whanne they weren Entred Echon,
Ban salutes him;
thanne bespak kyng Ban þere anon,
and Salwede kyng leodegan.
the king says they are welcome,
anon thussone he 3ald him than,
and seide that alle welcomen they were—
if their intentions are good.
"3if that for good 3e be comen here."
Ban replies:
thanne bespak kyng Ban tho,
and to kyng Leodegan he seide vnto:
"For no evil do we come,
"Certein, Sire, with-owten lesyng,
For non Maner of evel is oure comeng,
Ne not we comen owt of oure contre
here jn thy lond Forto Noyen the,
but to help you.
but as jn Manere of socouryng,
For sothe as j 3ow seye, Sire kyng,
and 3ou to don Servise jn swich degre
that to 3oure plesaunce now myhte be.
If you will not have us,
and 3if 3e wilen not with vs don so,
Owt of 3oure lond, sire, we scholen go
[leaf 140 c]
And to Betaken 3ow God Al-Myht,
that algates he spede 3ow jn 3oure Ryht;
we will go thither where people are glad of our coming.
and we scholen gon jnto an nothir contre,
theþer as Men of oure comenge glad wylen be
and vs Resceyven jn Swich a Manere
as we to 3ow oure Servise profren here.
However, we were told that you keep all manner of mercenaries."
but certeinly hit was vs tolde
that alle Manere of Sowdiours 3e with-holde,
and þerfore was hedyr oure comeng;
Therfore 3oure wille telle vs, Sire kyng."

King Leodegan consults his council.
Thanne answerede kyng Leodegan
that with his counseil speken wolde he than.
so þat he axede of hem anon
what that were best forto don.

13714. MS. *were*.

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and they to him answerid anone
that he scholde with-holden hem Echone.
"For worthy Men they Semen alle,
what so Evere there-of may befalle.
and also hastely as ȝe Mown don,
that ȝe knowen here names Echon,
and whens they ben & of what contre;
al this that [ȝe] knowen jn certeinte."
thanne partyd leodegan from his cownsaille,
and to these Barowns he cam, saunz faylle.
"J Merveille Mochel of ȝoure askyng,
& that ȝe wilen not discuren ȝow for non thing,
Ne tellen what ȝoure Names ben;
swich anoþer Meyne haue j not Sen.
but goode Men me semeth be ȝoure chere;
that causeth me to Resceyuen ȝou here.
and Ryht welcome Mooten ȝe be
bothe to my Barounz and Ek to Me
as Frendis and felawes to my Socowr,
thus to ȝow troste j bothe day & owr.
and to this ȝe scholen don Me affiaunce
with Me to stonden jnto owttraunce;
& as longe as ȝe ben jn My compenye,
trewly me to helpen ȝe scholen me affye.
but of on thing j wolde ȝow preye:
that what ȝe ben, ȝe wolden Me Seye;
and for this cause, ȝe vndirstonde:
ȝe Moun ben swich men of oþer londe,
that hit myhte ben gret schame to Me
of ȝow Servise to taken, certeinle,
and that j not of power were
ȝoure Mede to qwyten jn non Manere.
For j Suppose, ful trewely,
that ȝe ben grettere Men than am j."
Thanne they answered hym ageyn
that him Misplesen they Nolden, certeyn,
but hym to Serve jn Swich degre,

He is advised to keep them all,

and to find out who they are.

He says to them:

"I wonder at your demand and at your not telling your names.

But you seem to be good men; therefore I will keep you. Be welcome as friends and helpers,

and promise to be true to me.

Tell me who you are.

Perhaps it would be a shame for me to accept your service;

for you may be better men than I."

They promise to please him

13717. *they*, *y* squeezed in afterwards.
13722. MS. *althis that knowē*.
13726. *&* added in the left margin.

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that likyngge to hym Scholde hit be.
and to tell their names as soon as possible. and thus Ensurede kyng Ban, certeinlye,
For hym and for al his compenye,
and that, as hastely as he Myhte,
alle here Names to declaren owt Ryhte.

Then Arthur and his men are conducted by Merlin Thanne thus departyd they from the kyng
jnto the town to taken here loggeng
of the beste that they cowden gete.
So þat Merlyne hem ladde jnto a strete
to the house of a good young man, To Ryht a good 3ong Mannes hous,
that was bothe Riche and plentevous
and Ryht good Esement jn alle degre;
thydir ladde hem Merlyn, certeinle.
and his devout wife. Ek a good womman there was at house,
that wel lovede god and Ek hire spouse.
and him-Self was curteis Ek also,
and of good lif they weren bothen two.
He is called Blaires, she, Leonel. therto hym-Self Blaires hyhte,
his wyves name Leonel be Ryhte.
whanne to þat hostel þat they comen there,
They alight, anon they alyhten al jn fere,
are welcomed by the host, and Blayres wente hem ageyn,
and seyde they weren welcomen, jn certein.
Anon they Answerede Hym Ful sone
[leaf 140 d] that he scholde han Crystes benysone.
walk into the beautiful hall, they alyhteden, and jn-to halle they wente,
whiche was onestly arayed and gente.
and have their horses put into the stable. and the 3omen loggeden here hors anon,
and deden jn stable what was to don.
They spend a week in good cheer, serving king Leodegan at his court. thus there they sojorned viij dayes,
Not but Eten & dronkyn, & Merye playes
and on Morwe they to court wente
and Ek at Even after here talente.
so thus they servede kyng leodegan
with alle the worschepe they cowden than
Then the king sends out messengers thanne sente forth this kyng anon
be sondry Messengeris Many on

13781. *sojorned*, *j* corrected from *i*.

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that alle thike that myhte armes bere,
hem-self to defende, here ENEMYES to dere,
that jn Toraysse they scholde ben
on ascencioun EVen bothe fair & clen.
and ho so brak this comandement
Jn ony degre be his ENtent,
lik a man-MORDRERE he scholde ded be
and þerto his good to lesen, ful sikerle.

to call every fighting man

to Toralse on Ascension Eve,

on pain of death.

On the tothir syde sente Leodegan
of al his kynrede to EVery MAN
and al aboutes jnto ECHe contre
there he supposede ony sowdiours to be.
for he ne sparede for Siluer ne Goold
that plente of Sowdiours hauen he woold.
So þat with-owten ony more let
at assencioun, þe whiche was set,
xl thousend jn tente and pavyloun
weren logged vndir toreyse town
what on hors and what on foote
with-outen hem of þe town, wel j wote.

He also hires soldiers

in various countries.

jn the MENe while that this kyng
hadde thus aboutes sent his warneng,
happed that vppon the EVen of MAY
vppon hym ENtrede, with-owten delay,
kyng plariouns & kyng Roallaund,
whiche weren bothe of yrland,
Ek of assirois kyng Sonigrans,
and of þe same Lond kyng Sorohans.
these from the ost comen adown
jnto Tarmelyde al jn virown
with xv thousend armed ful clene
For NEde of vytaylle, as that j wene.
So hit happede, as hit hem befelle,
that NYgh to toraysse they com ful snelle,
where as soiournede kyng leodegan,
that his MEyne abod there than.
so þat there was gret NOYSE & CRY

Meanwhile,

the country is invaded by four heathen kings,

who come in search of provision,

and approach Toralse

with great noise.

13798. *his* added in the left margin ; *k* corrected, daubed.
13808. *wel*, *l* added afterwards.

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of these Malfetours, sekerly,
that Robbede & stroyede that contre.
The citizens shut the gates. Anon the citeȝeines aspiden hit, sykerle,
and here ȝates they schetten ful blyve,
that owt scholde gon non Man on lyve.
All the knights assemble. anon asarmes they gonne to crye,
the cheualrie þat with-jnne was, trewelye,
and to-forn the ȝate they semblede anon,
knyhtes of þe Rownd table Everychon.
(1) The 250 knights of the Round Table have Hervy of Rivel and Malet le Bruns for leaders, and the cheventeyn of hem was
hervy of Ryvel jn that plas,
and Malet le bruns was his felawe,
that Many a man browhten of dawe,
with cc. & fyfty jn here compenye
of worthy Bodyes, with-owten lye,
that vndir hevene non bettere Nere
thanne tho bodyes that weren there.
and keep to themselves. these be hem-selven weren alone,
For with opere Meddelen wolden they none.

(2) The knights of the town are 4000. On the tother part they gonnen hem dyhte,
the cheualrye of þe towne anon Ryhte,
And of hem iiij thousend ther were,
[leaf 141 *a*] That Myhte Bewelden Bothe Scheld and Spere.
Their leader is Cleodalis, this Meyne hadden a cheventeyn
that cleodalis hyhte, Jn certeyn,
who used to carry the king's banner before the arrival of the 250 knights, that wont was the kynges baner to bere
bothe jn pes and Ek jn werre.
but sethen the knyhtes of þe Rownde table
that Lond Entreden, with-owten fable,
thanne was hervy of Ryvel
the kynges banorer Everidel.
but now carries a small ensign. but he bar a lytel Gomfaynoun & did it sprede
with tweyne Langues be Ryht Resoun Rede,
the Feld Gold with corowns of ynde.
The great banner, carried by Hervy of Rivel, and the grete baner, that cam behynde,
whiche that hervy Ryvel Bar,
jn this Maner was araied thar:

13830. *scholde* corrected from *schelde*. 13850. MS. *hyhten*.
13852. *werre*, the second *r* corrected from *e*.

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with foure langues fayre & pleyne,
and there-jnne corouns of gold, jn certeyne,
the Feld asure bothe fair and schene;
thus this Baner bar he hem betwene.
whanne redy armed that they were,
aforn the ȝate they sembleden there,
and abyden the kynges comeng,
that ȝit at that tyme was anarmyng.
and whanne the kyng j-armed was,
anon he asemblede jn that plas,
and þere drowh to hervyes Baner
ſytteng vppon a good destrer.
and þere he houed with his compenye
To knowen of these jresch more certeinlye.

has four lozenges with golden crowne.

The knights assemble at the gate;

the king joins them,

and waits there.

On þe thridde partye was armed than
kyng artheur, king Bors, & kyng Ban,
and his compenye al jn fere,
of wheche but xlij ther were.
and ful ryaly they weren adyht,
and merlyn here baner bare in fyht.
and whanne j-horsed alle they were,
thanne to hem Seide merlyn there
that thyke day bothe gret & smalle
to Sewen his baner, what euere befalle.
"jn what place that evere ȝe hit Se,
loke ȝe hit Sewe and foleweth me."
and alle they seiden with on cry
that So they wolden, ful trewely.
thanne so they reden thorwh þe town,
and merlyn bar here gomfaynown.
but richere arayed thanne they were,
jn that town was neuere seyn there.
and here baner was ryht merveyllous
Forto beholden and ryht spetous:
his Baner hit was on dragown,
and not ful gret hit was jn virown;
the tayl a kebyt and an half was long,
al j-mailled as a serpent ful strong;

(3) Arthur and his 42 companions likewise get ready.

Merlin, who carries the banner,

asks all to follow it,

whatever may happen.

They ride through the town.

Their banner is of strange and grim device: a dragon

with a scaly tail,

13892. *h*ᵉ, abbreviation mark in darker ink.

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and his throte so gret & sterne hit was,
and vomiting fire.— that hit Semede hem jn that plas
so that the tonge that stood with-jnne
Euere Enflawmeng & wolde not blynne, 13904
that thorwh the throte owt fyr hit caste
vpe jnto the ayr, hit semede hem faste.
By this time the heathen have come to the town, and jn the Mene while the jresch Men,
that hethen tho weren, as j 3ow ken, 13908
with here speres comen to the town,
and assail the gates; and the 3ates asayllede jn virown.
then they go into the meadows, and seize the grazing cattle. and sethen jnto þe Medewes they wente,
& alle the bestes they token, veramente, 13912
that abowtes the town jn pasture weren tho;
with hem they Maden hem forto go.
For þere nas non Man hem to defende,
Tyl that god sone grace gan sende. 13916
Merlin thorwgh þe town paste Merlyne anon,
[leaf 141 b] There As the peple Weren sembled Echon,
and thorwgh that pres Redily he paste,
arrives at the gate with his troop. tyl to the 3ate he cam atte laste 13920
and with hym there al his Meyne.
He says to the gate-keeper: "Let us pass out." Anon to the porter thanne seide he:
"let vs now, porter, here owt pace,
Fore hit is tyme to comen on place." 13924
The keeper replies: "Not without the command of the king." and þe porter answered hem ageyn
that they Scholden not passen hit, Jn certein,
with-owten comaundement of the kyng,
and thus 3af he hem to answeryng. 13928
Merlin says: "That's bad, "that is be Misaventure," quod Merlyn tho,
"that thou þe 3ate ne schalt vndo,
as I am as strong as you." whanne that j am as strong as thou,
and that Schal j sone preven now." 13932
He pulls out the gate with his hand, Anon kam Merlyne to the 3ate,
and with his hond pulled there-ate,
and pulde þe 3ate owt from the ston.
and out they ride. thanne owt they wenten there Echon, 13936
ho so wolde or ho so Nolde;
owt they Riden al glytered jn goolde.

13921. *al* added above the line, after *his*.

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Whanne that the two an fowrty Men
owt of þe cyte weren passed than,
the 3ate closed a3en also faste
as hit ne hadde neuere ben vnwraste.
For whiche Merveille thanne anon
these thre kynges blessed hem Everichon,
and so diden al that companye.
but faste forward Merlyn gan hym hye,
And ouertook of that Meyne
two thousend hethen jresch, certeinle,
and ladden with hem a ful gret praye.
thanne anon as Merlyne hem saye,
anon he Sewede with his Banere,
and his compenye holy folewede him there.
betwene hem þere was gret bataille,
that certeinly, with-owten faylle,
be half a Myle Nygh hem was non
but the xlij there al alon,
and token the pray, & lad it ageyn
aforn the 3ates tho, jn certein.
and they ne hadden not Ryden but a stounde,
that they Sien vppon the Grownde
the foure kynges Rehersed be-fore
with xv thousend Men j-armed thore,
that with hem ladde so gret plente
of kariage & of pray to-ward the se,
that they hadde Robbed jn that lond,
as j do 3ow here to vndirstond.
Anon as Merlyn Sawh al this,
thanne to his feleschepe he cryde, j-wys:
" Seweth me now for ony thyng,
and 3e scholen Sen a good boordyng."
there they hym seweden Everichon,
but Euere to-fore Merlyne gan gon.
and swich a wynd he gan to arere
with wondir blastes of tempest þere,
that swich a powdir amonges hem þere was,
amonges here Enemyes jn that plas,

13940 13944 13948 13952 13956 13960 13964 13968 13972 13976

The gate closes behind them.

All marvel.

Merlin first overtakes 2000 heathen

with plenty of booty,

attacks them,

and brings the booty back to the city.

Then he sees the four heathen kings with 15000 men,

likewise laden with spoil,

and cries to his company "Follow me, and you shall see a good joke."

He raises such a wind amongst the enemies

13966. *here*, *he* through correction.
13976. *h'e*, abbreviation mark in darker ink.

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that they cannot see one another.

that non of hem oþer myhte Se ;
So merveillous dowst hit was & gret plente.

The 42 follows attack the heathen.

Anon as these two and fowrty men
with-jnne these hethen weren entrid than,
they beten and slowen so many a-down,
that ded abowtes they lyen jn virown.

Now king Leodegan orders the gates to be opened;

Anon comanded kyng leodegan
that the ȝates anon opened weren than ;
and so they weren jn ryht gret haste,
So that thike meyne owt þere paste.

[leaf 141 c]

Cleodalis, with 4000 men, sallies out,

There the Steward Rod forth Be-fore
with iiij Thousend men wel armed thore,
and they founden the ȝate schet ful faste,
there as merlyne and his meyne owt weren paste.
with xv thousend they fowhten that whyle þere
Ful merveillously a ful gret tyde in fere.

and joins in the battle.

Thanne forth cam cleodalys tho,
and to that pres faste gan he go.
So that the noyse of speris that þere were,
the brekyng of hem, jnto the cyte was herd there.

Great destruction is wrought;

there was thanne so gret distroccioun
of men dede & hors slayn j[n] viroun,

the din resembles thunder.

So that hit Semede be here gruntyng
that hit hadde ben a merveyllous thondryng,
but merveillously wrowhte these xlij men
that vndir merlynes Banere weren than.

The four heathen kings divide their army:

Whanne that the iiij kynges Syen al this,
that with the cristene they weren thus mellid, j-wis,
they departed her meyne anon vntwo,

7000 go against the approaching banner of king Leodegan,

of wheche vij m^{l} to þe cyte gan go
ayens the baner of kyng leodegan.
whanne they aspide hym comeng than,
ech of hem ayens oþer gan forto ryde,
also faste as they myhten that Tyde.

13988. *T* through correction. 13991. *þere* added afterwards.
13992. *whylle* crossed out, and *tyde in fere* added, at the end of the line. 13998. MS. *j viroñ*.
13999. *h'e*, abbreviation mark in darker ink.
14006. MS. *M* with *l* at the top (= *Milia*).
14008. MS. *Comẽng*.

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and þe toþer viij thousend fowhten ful faste,
whilles that here strengthe myhte laste.
but leodegan and this othir meyne,
betwixen hem gret bataylle was, Sikerle,
that bothe helmes & hauberkes j-borsten they were,
Neþer non mail of steel lasten myhte not there,
that down they fillen al blody to grownde,
For þere was ȝoven many a dethes wounde.
And whanne here speris j-borsten they were,
anon here swerdis they drowen owt there.
thanne began there gret Bataylle,
that merveille to beholde hit was, saun*s* faylle.
and namly the knyhtes of þe rownd table
merveillously they fowhten, with-owten fable,
of wheche weren but two hundred & fyfty,
and of the tothere vij thousend, ful sekerly.
but at gret mischef they weren there,
that here bodyes gonnen tremblen for fere;
and whethir they wolde other none,
here grownd to forsaken mad weren they sone.
but they helden hem so faste jn fere,
that no man with-jnnen hem entren myhte there;
Nethir litel ne mochel, lasse ne more,
with-jnnen hem entren cowde not thore.
whanne Plareouns & kyng Roallaunt
To-gideris swich a meyne gonnen se haunt,
and of hem so lytel þeple there was
aȝens so gret meyne jn that plas,
Ful gret dispit hadden these kynges bothe,
and sworen ful bitterly many a gret othe
that of hem askape scholde not on,
as ferforthly as they myhten don.

Thussone they maden an ordenance
Forto han wrowht this meyne mischance.
So that xl of that litel compenye
weren sore defowlid, with-owten lye.
And euer this jresch hethen peyned hem fulsore

8000 remain.

The fight with king Leodegan is fierce;

many are killed.

The knights of the Round Table excel,

but are in great distress.

They keep close together.

The heathen leaders of the 7000 men

viciously vow that none of them shall escape.

Forty of the knights are overthrown;

14028. *h'e* abbreviation mark in darker ink.
14030. *grow̃d* added in the left margin.

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hem to han de-fowlid ful mochelis more
and hem to han maymed, ȝif hit myhte han be;
still they keep the assailants off. but they myhte not thanne for here compene.
For with-jnne hem þere non man there paste,
as fer as ony of here dyntes of swerdis myhte laste.
And jn this mene whille, as j ȝow telle,
King Leodegan is captured, vppon kyng leodegan they fowhten ful felle,
So that fulsore beten he was jn that place,
and there with his enemyes j-taken he was
and led away by 500 men and lad forth there anon tho ryht
with v hundred redy armed to fyht.
[leaf 141 d] So Hym Forth they Ladden, As J Vndyrstond,
towards king Rion. towardis kyng Ryown of jrlond,
And with gret joye they forth hym ladde,
for they wenden the werris ended ben hadde.
So thus they hyede hem wondir faste,
Tyl owt of the ost that they weren paste.
When he realizes his plight, And whanne that kyng leodegan Say this,
that with his enemyes he was taken, j-wys,
and him forth ladden moche maugre his hed,
he is faint with grief. For sorwen he swownede jn that sted,
and wepe ful Sore, & made gret pyte,
that jn swich a maner j-taken was he.
they hym forth ladden vppon the weye
two Skottysch milles, the sothe to seye.
The battle is continued. but evere the noyse ful gret hit was
of the vij thowsend jn that plas
and of the cc. and fyfty knyhtes,
The knights bemoan the loss of king Leodegan; that ayens þe vij thousend held fyhtes,
that maden gret sorwe & gret mone,
For kyng leodegan was so gone.
and whanne they syen, hit wolde non oþer be,
that non reskeus was there, sekerle,
they defend themselves in a compact body, they dresseden here bakkes al jn fere,
and jn maner of a scheltrom they stoden there,
and there thanne so sore they fowhte,
that non man deren hem ne mowhte.
and kill many but they maden gret occisioun
of men & hors aboutes hem jn virown

14082. *ād* corrected from *an* (in darker ink).

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with-owten remevyng of ony place; — without moving from the spot.
ful mochel peple be hem j-slayn þere wace.
So that they swetten for gret peyne,
so hydous the storm was & so sodeyne,
that they that atte wyndowes gonnen loke — The lookers-on in the city weep with anguish,
out of the cyte, as Seith the boke,
wepten for angwysch & for pyte
for the sorewe that they be these knyhtes gonnen se,
and merveilled gretly jn here mynde — and marvel at their bravery.
how swich hertis with-jnnen hem myhten they fynde.
but whanne gonnore beheld hire fadir dere, — Gonnore bewails the fate of her father.
that with his enemyes forth lad was he there,
Ful gret deol sche gan to make,
and riht gret Sorwe to here gan take.

Now a whille lete vs here dwelle,
and of kyng Artheur lete vs now spelle — Now we will return to Arthur
and also of his compenye, sauns faylle, — and his 42 followers,
how that they spedden jn bataylle
Ayens viij thousend forto fyhte,
thike xlij men of gret myhte,
and with hem the steward of Tarmelyde, — together with Cleodalis the steward
that cleodalis hyht that tyde.

Now reherseth this Storye ryht here
of the xlij whiche þat there were,
& of the iiij thousend that cleadalis — and his 4000 men,
vndir his Baner browhte, j-wys,
whiche with viij thousend j-medled were, — in melée with the 8000 heathen under Sonigrens and Sorohans.
that kyng sonigrenx & Sorohanx cowndiet there;
of whiche weren manye defoulyd & slayn,
as this storye reherseth here jn certayn.

And Whanne they Hadden Longe Fowhten Jn Fere, [leaf 142 *a*]
merlyne with his Banere owt prekede there, — After a long fight, Merlin calls on his company to follow him;
and to his meyne he cryede Jn gret haste
that they hym Scholden folwen faste.
and so they dyden ryht Swyftly tho, — they ride swiftly,
as faste as here hors cowden renne oþer go,

14101. *here*, *h* corrected from *d*.
14105. *Ayens*, *A corrected from*
14116. *Certayn*, *a* corrected from *e*.

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and overtake the prisoners' convoy.

tyl that they comen jnto on valey,
where as these v hundred ladden awey
kyng leodagan, here presoner.

Merlin cries:

And anon Merlyn ascryed hym ther:

"Rescue the king,

"Now, barouns, let Se, kythe here 3oure myht
To Reskwen the kyng here with 3oure fyht.

or he goes his way!

and but 3if 3e don, he goth his way."
And Evere he cride: "Tray, tray, tray!"
So that these knyhtes Sewede on faste,
Tyl they hym ouertoken atte laste.

They rush into the convoy,

Thussone they Entred hem betwene
with manye gret strokis, as hit was sene,

slay, and maim.

and slowh & maymed al that per were,
that nowht on his hele hadde there.
there pese xlij maden swich Martyrdom,
of Men & hors a ful gret Som,

Of the 500 escape only five.

that vnnethes askaped ony away
of thike v hundred, the Sothe to say,
Sauf only fyve, that fledden be-fore,
anon as kyng leodagan they hadden forlore.

King Leodegan marvels,

And thus Reskwed was Leodagan the kyng,
whiche to hym was ful gret Merveyllyng,
To sen Swich Martirdom Jn that plase
as of thyke lytel peple j-Mad there wase.
and whanne he beheld the dragown pat Merlyn bar,
thanne wiste he wel his frendis weren thar.

and thanks God for such soldiers.

thanne thaukede he God of that dede,
that so his Sowdeours with him dyden spede.
Anon Merlyn there to hym wente,
and pere hym sesede anon presente.

Ulfin and Bretel alight,

Whanne Vlphyn beheld kyng Leodegan,
anon of his hors alyhte he than,
and sire Bretel jn the same wyse,
anon he alyhte to pat kyng of pryse,

unfetter the king,

and him vnbownden, & armed hym wel,

14138. *of*, o corrected from *a*.
14142. *leodagan*, the first *a* corrected from *e*.
14148. *wiste he* twice, the former crossed out.

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and sette hym on a destrer bothe good & lel.
whanne Bretel & Vlphyn horsid hym hadde jn þat wise,
he thankede hem ful hyhly of here Servise.
thanne Merlyne began to ascryen eft sone:
"Now thynketh, Barouns, what ȝe han to done.
Seweth now me, what euere ȝe do,
and be non wyse partyth not me fro."
he took his hors with the spores welfaste,
and toward the cyte he prikede jn haste,
where that the knyhtes of the Rounde table
at gret mischef weren, with-owten fable,
of wheche two hundre[d] and fyfty knyhtes
there nere but xx on hors owt-ryhtes,
and al the Remnant on foote were,
and ful manfully fowhten there.
thanne Merlyne prikede so faste to-fore,
so faste hym Sewede his feleschepe thore,
that here hors on swot they weren echon;
So faste thyderwardis dyden they gon.
And the dragoun þat Merlyn Bar,
Swiche plente of fyr hit cast owt thar,
that tho whiche weren jn the cyte,
Large half a myle they myhten hit se,
the clernesse of that Fer so bryht,
how jnto the eyr hit wente vp ryht.

Whanne that the cetezeins of that cite
behelden that jlke litel meyne,
thanne wisten they wel, the xlij it were,
that jn feleschepe weren jn fere,
and with hem was kyng leodagan,
that these xlij hadde reskwed than.
wherfore gret joye they gonne to make,
and so dede Gonnore for here fadris sake,
merveilleng sore what these knyhtes were,

and put him on a good horse.

Now Merlin again asks them to follow him,

and sets off towards the city,

where of the 250 knights only 20 are still on horseback.

He rides fast;

the dragon vomiting so much fire

that it can be seen at fully half a mile's distance.

When the citizens see the little troop coming

with king Leodegan,

they rejoice.

So does Gonnore, and wonders who these knights are

14166. *welfuf* (*f* not completed) crossed out before *jn haſte*.
14169. MS. *hundre*.
14172. MS. *ful manfulmanly*; cf. l. 14298.
14174. *so*, *s* corrected, in a fashion, from *T*; the character still looks like a *T*.
14182. *ryht*, *r* corrected from *e*.

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[leaf 142 b] That so Vygoursly fowhten there.
that fight so marvellously. For lyk as thondyr here dyntes ferde,
that jnto the Eyr hit myhte ben herde;
For so Merveillous was here fyhtyng,
that alle that weren jn here stondyng
they Slowen down Ryht as they come,
that to-gederis they lyen on Many a throme.
They fall upon the heathen. and whanne the xlij jn fere
amonges tho jeawntis weren Entred þere,
thanne began the fyht so strong,
that wondir passyng noyse was hem among.
so that Gonnore, with-owten Nay,
that hydows Noyse Myhte heren, Jn fay.
Ban gives irresistible strokes, there dyde kyng Ban of Baynok,
with Correcense, his swerd, ȝaf Many a strok.
For whom that Evere þere-with he smot,
to grownde they wenten anon foot hot,
that neyther helm, hauberk, ne haberjon
withstondyn his dyntes Myhten nouht on.
and thus took he on jn that Bataylle,
slaying man and horse. þat downryht slowh Man & hors, with-owten faille.
so there nas non, myhte with-stonden his dynt,
Tyl of here lyveȝ that they weren stynt.
So does Boors, and jn the same Manere ferde kyng bors,
that of alle the Enemyes gaf he non fors.
and whanne the hethene beheldeu this
of þe Merveillous strokys they Syen, j-wys,
and so does Arthur. and how kyng Artheur with kalybrond
Merveillous strokis ȝaf with his hond
(aȝens weche swerd, the sothe to say,
Myhte there non armure lasten that day,
For Evere he vsede to smyten so sore,
that non Man his strok abyden Myhte thore)—

In the course of the battle, Thanne, whilles they fowhten Jn this Manere,
happede, kyng artheur ȝit neyghede hym Nere,

14194. MS. *myhtē*.
14198. *they*, *t* (very small) inserted afterwards.
14212. *downryht*, *w* corrected from *o* (and something else).
14221. *weche*, *w* corrected from *f*.
14226. *artheur* added afterwards above the line.

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and mette *with* on that hyhte caunlent,
that hem of þe Round table anoyede, verament,
and þer*to* dide he his power tho.
but Artheur, as hit happede so,
Mette with this caunlent, j ȝou Ensure,
whiche chef was of passyng Mesure:
xiiij fote long he was, j wene,
of swich Man*er* feet as now þ*er*e bene.
And wha*n*ne kyng Artheur there him Mette,
a wondirful strok þ*er*e on him he sette:
besides his Scheld he smot hym so,
that thorwh bothe scholdres calibrand gan go.
And ano*n* he fyl a-down, with-owte*n* les,
and his hors forth Ran thorwh-out þ*at* pres.
So they that jn the castel were,
behelden how Arthour gan him bere;
Also Gonnore, þe dowhter of kyng Leodagan,
Mer*v*eillede mochel what was that Man;
and so dyden þe peple Everychon
that hym behelden be on & on.

Ful strong was þe stowr and þ*at* Melle,
that thike tyme was to-fore the cyte
where as þe .cc. knyhtes & fyfty
and the two and fourty felawes, sekerly,
aȝens viij thousend helden here fyht
as worthy p*er*sones of power & Myht.
but what thorwh the strokis þ*at* þere were*n* deld,
Ne left but fyve thousend jn the feld,
whiche were*n* ful Soreweful jn here degre,
that kyng Cavnlent was ded, sekerle.
  tha*n*ne happede, kyng Ban cam ful blyve,
as worthy a knyht as ony on lyve,
and with his good swerd, þ*at* was so Brown,
ano*n* there Rawhte he to kyng plariou*n*,
that þe grettest jeawnt was he of þ*at* ost;
but þ*er*e kyng ban thouhte to fellen his bost.
vppon the helm So he him there Rawhte,

Arthur meets with one who is called Caunlent;

this chieftain is 14 feet long.

Arthur, with a stroke from the side,

cuts through both his shoulders.

Gonnore and the others who see him, are full of wonder.

Violent is the fight of the

250 knights

and the 42 fellows

against the 8000 heathen.

Of these now only 5000 remain.

Ban hits a gigantic chieftain

on the helm,

14228. *that* corrected from *the*.
14262. *ban* added above the line.

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that Ryht ful sone gret harm he cawhte; 14264
[leaf 142 c] The strok thorwh the panne Hit gothe
slitting him from forehead to girdle. and thorwh the left scholdere Evene, for sothe,
and jnto the gyrdelstede Evene down Ryht,
that ded down he fyl for fawt of Myht. 14268
Boors cuts off the banner-bearer's arm. Thanne kyng Bors þere smot so Sarmedoun,
that bar these jeauntes Gomfanown,
that bothen arm, Baner, and scheld
ful fer hit fley jnto the feld. 14272
King Leodegan says to himself: these strokes beheld kyng leodagan,
and to him-self jn his herte seide than:
"Never king had better help!" "there nas neuere kyng, so god me spede,
that better socour hadde atte Nede." 14276
Now the heathen turn to flight. and whanne the jeauntes syen here lordes ded,
and here banerer was slayn jn that Sted,
anon they Tornede hem to the flyht,
Eche man be hym-Selve, hos gon Myht. 14280
A party out of the city pursue them. thanne that Syen they of the cyte,
& owte þere comen a praty Meyne,
wel two thousend j-armed ful bryht,
and folwed that chas þere anon Ryht. 14284
But Merlin returns to Cleodalis (p. 377). but Merlyn wente not that contre,
For sone to cleodalis thanne turned he,
where as he with his iiij thousend Men
ajens vij thousend fawht he then, 14288
whiche Sonygrenx hadde jn gouernaunce
and kyng Sorohaunx with Mischaunce.

He finds him unhorsed, Whanne Merlyne cam to that Bataylle,
he fond Cleodalis, with-owten faylle, 14292
vnhorsed and at the Erthe, jn certein,
but standing upright with his banner, but on his fet he was Rekeuered ageyn,
and the baner kepte, with-owten lesyng,
For that wolde he not leven for non thyng. 14296
and defended by his men. and abowtes him stoden his compenye,
that him defendid ful Manfullye,
but they weren at gret Mischef.
Natheles Merlyn gan sone hem Relef, 14300
Merlin and his party and amonges hem Entrede with his baner,
& þe xlij felawes him folwede ther.

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thanne jn they flyen as stordyly — dash upon the enemy;
as Evere dide tempest out of þe sky,
and so worthily they fowhten there,
thyke xlij felawes *þat* were*n* jn fere,
that neuere men myghte bettere do
than thyke compenye diden tho.
but Evere this kyng leodagan — king Leodegan is ever with them.
here feleschepe nolden not forsaken than.
whanne these xlij amonges the jeawntes were,
Swich a noyse amonges hem was þanne there, — The din is tremendous.
as of alle þe world the carponteris
jn wodes hadde hewen stowt & fers.

This was ȝit the angriest stour — The struggle is the fiercest that day.
that thike day they suffreden be ony our,
and þe most dolorowse and angwisschous,
but Evere hem socourede swete jesus.
For there a man myhte beholde
bothe men & hors fulmanifolde — Men and horses fall as thick as moths in the field
as thikke fallen vnder here scheld
as that Motes flen jn the feld.
There myhten ȝe sen hors walken astray, — horses run about with
that non Man of hem took kepe, jn fay, — empty,
of wheche the Sadelis ful blody were — bloody saddles;
of þe knyhtes that vppon hem weren slayn there.
and swich a noyse amonges hem was, — the noise resembles
For lyk as thondring hit ferde jn that plas. — thunder.
So that theke xlij persones — The heroism of the 42 was spoken of long after their death;
Merveillously boren hem for þe nones,
that aftyr the deth of hem, j vndirstond,
hit was of hem longe spoken jn that lond,
and, as this storye Reporteth now here,
that So Manye Bodyes weren slayn there,
Beheueded, qwartered, dislemed Also, — [leaf 142 *d*]
that Many day aftyr men Myhten go — and the traces of the battle were visible many a day after.
jnto þe places as the batailles were
be men dede & hors that lyen there
thorwh the conqwest, as J ȝow telle.

14308. *than*, MS. *that*. 14313. þ^e squeezed in afterwards.
14331. *j*, MS. *jn*.

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Here follows hos names here-aftyr J schal ȝou spelle,
For so wyle here this storye,
the list of aforn goode men to rehersen hem, vtterlye.

the The ferste kyng Ban of Baynoc hyhte,
the secunde kyng Bors, a man of myhte,
the thridde kyng Artheur that tyme was,
the fourthe was Antron jn that plas,
the fyfthe was vlphyn, as j ȝow tel,
forty- the sixthe was goode sire Bretel,
the seventhe that tyme hihte sire kay þe fers,
the viijthe sire lucauns the botelers,
the ixthe, the sone of kerdif, hihte þan doo,
two the xthe moret le Roche cleped was tho,
the xjthe dryauns of þe forest sauage, j vndirstonde,
the xijthe hyhte lorgelons de la launde,
the xiijthe, j kan tellen ful wel,
heroes hihte belias Amoreus of mayden castel,
the xiiijthe Flaundris ly breȝ, wel j wot,
the xvthe hihte ladmas of Baynot,
the xvjthe hithe Amoreus ly brews,
who the xvijthe Anchalanx ly rows,
the xviijthe bloys of casel, fel & fers,
the xixthe hihte goode Bliobers,
The xxthe hihte canodes þat tyme be vois,
had the xxjthe hihte melyadon de bloys,
the xxijthe Aladank le crespe, þis storye says,
the xxiijthe hihte placides ly gays,
the xxiiijthe Lampadys Plangwye,
come the xxvthe geroas lenches in compenye,
the xxvjthe cristofre de la Roche Byse.
the xxvijthe engelyn desuans, a man of prise,
the xxviijthe calogrenaunt the fre,
to the xxixthe Agwysale le desyrre,
The xxxthe thanne hyhte good Agravel,
the xxxjthe hihte thanne claryel,
the xxxijthe Gryves de lambele,

14361. *of*, MS. *of*. 14364. *xxjthe*, *j* corrected from *t*.
14375. *Gryves*, *r* corrected from *y*.

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the xxxiijthe Sweodyn, þat was fayr & lele,
the xxxiiijthe hyhte than Merangus,
the xxxvthe Gornayns karadus,
the xxxvjthe hihte clariaunt of Ban,
the xxxvijthe layȝ hardis, a worthi Man,
the xxxviijthe Amayndan the stowte,
the xxxixthe hihte oȝenan jn that Rowte,
the xlthe hyhte galet cownde,
the xljthe gales the chans, *par*de,
the xlijthe was bleene, kyng bors godsone,
the xliijthe, Merlyne, gan with hem wone,
the xliiijthe was the kyng leodegan,
that here Feleschepe wolde leve*n* for no*n* Man.
alle these worthi Men jn fere
To Resku cleodalis wenten there,
that steward was of Tarmelyde.
as a worthy man he prevyd him that tyde:
ȝit for non wrong kyng leodagan hadde hym j-do,
Neue*re* from hym departen wolde he not tho.
And ȝit so wolde not Many a Man
don þe*re* as cleodalis dyde than,
but he dede that Many a ma*n* wolde not do;
For the cause ȝe schole knowen also.
and ȝit wolde he neue*re* his lord forsake
For al the wrong he suffrede & wrake,
but eue*re* be him stood in al myschef,
as þowh to hym he hadde be*n* good & lef.

14376 Tarmelide
14380 as
14384 soldiers.
With them were Merlin and Leodegan.
14388
Cleodalis, who was relieved by them,
14392 was a man of rare nobility of soul: he never forsook his king,
14396
14400 notwithstanding all the wrong he suffered from him.

This is the trowthe, As J ȝow telle, [leaf 143 *a*]
how that cleodalis the steward hit befelle.
hit behapped that kyng Leodegan
a lady of hygh parage wedded had than,
and therto she was of gret Bewte,
and jnto Tarmelyde browhte hire he
owt of hire faderis owne lond,
as j do ȝow to vndirstond.
& with hire sche browhte a Mayden ful gent
of wondir gret bewte, verament,

14404 This is what had happened: King Leodegan wedded a noble lady.
14408
She brought with her a maiden of wonderful beauty.
14412

14407. *therto*, *o* blotted.

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Cleodalis loved this maiden,
whiche mayden cleodalis lovede ful derne,
For there-of myhte non man hym werne.
and asked the king's permission to marry her.
So that he preyde leodagan, verament,
that he myhte wedden þat mayden gent
For alle his goode longe Servise;
he axede no more to his apryse.
The king consented.
the kyng hym graunted with riht good wylle,
For þat he was mochel beholden him tylle.
and whanne j-wedded hire that he hadde,
and from cherche as sche was ladde,
At the wedding feast,
and browht was jnto the kynges paleys,
and down at mete was set on deys,
therto apparaylled ful Ryaly
aboven alle ladyes that seten hire by,
she surpassed all in beauty.
thanne hadde sche moche more bewte
thanne ony oþer lady, Sykerle;
The king fell in love with her,
wherthorwh þe kyng on hire his herte caste,
that for non thing azen myht he hit wreste.
but said nothing at the time.
So that stylle Leodagan the kyng
a gret whylle dwellede jn morneng,
For sche was the fairest creature jn ony londe,
as this Storye doth me to vndirstonde;
and thus at that tyme seyde he no more than.
One Midsummer, he sent Cleodalis on an expedition against his enemies.
but as hit happede that kyng leodagan
at an hygh feste of seynt Johne,
Leodagan Cleodalis owt he sente anon
a certeyn chevachye forto do
vppon his enemyes, þat hym noyede tho,
The wife stayed at home, keeping the queen company.
and his faire lady behinde lefte there
the qwene compenye forto bere
(For bothen they loveden as paramour,
the qweene & sche, with-owten langour)—

One night Leodegan lay by his wife,
hit behappede vppon a nyht,
Leodagan be his qwene lay, as wile ryht.
and begot a daughter.
that nyht on hire he be-gat tho
a fair dowhter, with-owten mo,
that jn hire age Gonn[or]e hit hyhte,

14415. See footnote to l. 14142.
14431. *c* crossed out before *Leodagan*. 14449. MS. *Gonne*.

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whiche that was a wondir fair wyhte.
this qweene sche was of gret bownte — The queen, who was very
and an holy lyuere, certeinle; 14452 pious,
and on costom hadde this qweene:
þat but fewe Nyhtes hit scholde bene — and regularly attended
that sche ne wolde to Mynstre go — matins,
hire Matynes & servise to heren tho. 14456
that same Nyht þat sche conceyved was, — went also this time,
To Matynes sche Ros a ful gret pas,
and be the stewardis wyf sche cam ful stille,
and fond hire Slepyng, & thowhte non ylle. 14460
thanne forth sche wente, & wook hire nowht, — without waking the steward's wife.
To serven hire god, as sche hadde thowht,
and lefte this lady there stylle on slepe,
that of non creature took sche kepe. 14464
Forth wente þe qweene alone *with* hire sawtyere
to þe Mynstre, that faste by was there.
Anon this kyng leodagan tho — The king
this lady thowhte to werken wo. 14468
and whanne þat the qweene to Mynstre was,
anon vp he Ros jn that plas, — rose,
and qweynte alle the lyhtes þat weren wyt[h]-jnne, — put out the lights,
For Er wolde he þat tyme not blynne. 14472
Sethen to the bed he goth ful Ryht, — and went to that lady's bed.
there cleadalis wif lay jnne that nyht.
Whanne the Lady Felte On Jn Hyre Bed, — [leaf 143 b]
sche axede ho was there Jn that sted. 14476 She asked who was there.
"hold thou thi pes," quod kyng leodagan; The king told her to be silent,
"and þou discure me to ony Man, or else he would kill her.
vppon my swerd thou schalt deye,
j the Swere, dame, be my feye." 14480

This lady defended hire with al hire Myht, — Her resistance availed little;
but non noyse dorste sche Make owt Ryht.
but lytel avayllede there hire defens,
For be hire he lay there jn presens, 14484 the king begot on her another daughter.
and that same Nyht begat on hire tho
anoþer dowhter Ryht also.

14451. *was* crossed out before *sche*.
14459. *wyf* added above the line. 14471. MS. *wyt jnne*.

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Both were born in the same night.

hit happede, whanne this qweene deliuered was
The same Nyht of a dowhter jn that plas,
the same Nyht, with-owten ony faylle,
the stewardis wif gan forto travaille,
and anoþer dowhter hadde of gret bewte;
a fairrere creature myhte non be.

They were so like each other, that they could be distinguished only by a peculiar birth-mark.

thanne so lyk bothe children they were,
that on from anothir knowen myhte not þere,
Sauf gonnore þat þe qwenes dowhter was,
a wondir Mark hadde sche jn prevy plas:
vppon the Reynes that child behynde
hadde þe fygure as a corowne of a kynge.
and but hit were be thike Mark,
cowde non Man hem disseuere jn lyht ne derk.

Both were called Gonnore,

and ech of hem Gonnore hyhte,
as be here baptem j-named be Ryhte.

and brought up together.

And Evere weren they Norsched bothe jn fere,
tyl that the qweene after deide there.

After the death of the queen,

and the kyng aftyr hire deth anon
aftyr cleodalis wif sente ful son,

the king confined the steward's wife in a castle.

and al aȝens that ladyes wylle
jn a castel he closede hire ful stille,
bencheson that his steward of prise
with hire scholde speke jn non wyse.

Five years later,

and thus he contenuede v ȝer,
that cleodalis his wif ne say not ther;

the steward's friends remonstrated with the king,

til on a day þe frendis of þe steward than
there-of spoken to kyng leodagan,
and hem answerede: whille he hadde werre,
he scholde hire not hauen nethir Nyh ne ferre.

but in vain.

that ȝit kepte he hire Stylle jnto the comeng,
that jnto his lond Entrede artheur the kyng.

Yet Cleodalis remained faithful.

Now ȝit, behold, for al this distresse
the steward þe kyng Servede neuere the lasse.

Now we will return to the battle;

but ȝit torneth this Storye ageyn,
and of this Steward speketh, certein,
how with the jeauntes he fawht on foote,
that him and his felawes helden Ryhte hote.

more of the Gonnores later on.

and after, as *processe* cometh and tyme,
of bothe Gonnores scholen ȝe here jn Ryme.

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Evere the bataylle ful gret hit was,
there as cleodalys was jn plas.
And assone as these xlij men
amonges þat peple weren entred then,
they fowhten faste on eche a syde,
and moche peple was Slayn that tyde.
many speres to-borsten weren there,
helmes j-cloven & scheldes jn fere;
dede bodyes fillen faste adown,
eche man on othir jn vyrown.
So that jn þe feldes al abowte
Stedis þere wenten a ful gret rowte,
here reynes hangeng betwene here feet,
that eche man forth hem passen let.
and euere þe steward defendid him faste,
tyl he was reskwed atte laste.
there many a lady was husbondles,
and many a sostyr brothirles,
and many a modir was childles,
Thorwh strokis of cleoda[li]s jn þat pres.

In the battle where Cleodalis and the 42 fellows fight,

great destruction is wrought.

Many horses run about riderless;

many women become husbandless, brotherless, or childless.

Whanne Sonygranx And Kyng Sorpharouns
beheldyn al tho grete distroccioun*s*
and the grete slawhtre that there was,
anon kyng Sonigranx jn that plas
his trompes let Blowen, his tymbers let bete
here mene there forto gaderen to hepe.
And anon as assembled they were,
Sire kay amonges hem entrede there,
Sire Lucans and ek Sire gyrflecs
amonges hem prekede jnto þat pres.
ech of hem hadde a gret Stowr lawnce,
þer-with amonges hem they gonnen preken & praunce.
Anon sire kay kyng Sonygranx mette,
and swich a boffet þere he him sette,
that tope ouer tayl he goth to grownde,

[leaf 143 c]

Sonigrans and Sorfarins (p. 382) assemble their people by sound of trumpets and timbrels.

Kay, Lucans, and Girfles ride against them.

Kay throws Sonigrans to the ground;

14538. *al abowte* crossed out, and *a ful gr't rowte* added, at the end of the line.
14540. *Man*, *M* corrected from an uncompleted *f*.
14546. *Thorwgh*, *T* corrected from *a*.—MS. *cleodas*.

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where he long lies motionless.

where as he lay a ful long stownde,
that neuere remevede foot ne hand,
as j do ȝow here to vndirstand.

Lucans and Girfles kill two men.

Ryht tho sire Lucauns and sire girfles
slowen tweyne stark ded jn that plas.

Whanne kyng Sonygraux to grownde was leyd,

The heathen try to rescue Sonigrans;

anon these hethen maden a gret Breyd
hym to Reskwe with alle here Myht,

but the 42 fellows surround him.

but that the xlij felawes anon Ryht
abouten Sonygranx assemblid Echon,
that thike tyme nyhe hym myhte come non.
So that gretly defoulyd he was,
as he lay there jn that plas,
Er that he myhte Recoueren ageyn;
the hethen abowtis semblede, certeyn.

Merlin, carrying his banner,

and Merline, that bar the Banere,
the cccc he cam to Refreschen there,
and the xlij felawes jn his compenye
jn þat bataylle weren sprad, ful Sekerlye.

and Cleodalis, remounted on a good courser,

and cleodalis Sormowntyd was
& on a good destrer sette jn þat plas,
and his Baner Evere held he stylle.
Thanne ascryen he gan with good wille,

at the head of a party,

that tyme assembleden they ful faste,
and ho so myhte to-fore gon, they gonne haste.

make a fierce attack

Anon there began a Merveillous stour,
that was ful of angwis & of dolour.
there knyhtes feld men Myhten se
betwixen hors legges ful gret plente.

on the compact mass of the heathen.

but of the hethene so gret peple was,
that hard it was to Entren jn that plas.
and so they fowhten Evere than & then,

Now arrive the 5000 fugitives from Toraise (pp. 381 f.).

tyl atte theke v thousend Men
that fledden from Torayse atte þe bataylle,
azen retorneden, with-outen faille.
they Repeyrede anon to kyng Sorpharins
and to kyng Sonigranx, with-owten lesinges.

14596. This line was omitted and then written down the right margin.
14597. *Sorpharins*, *o* daubed.

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But these xlij goode Saudioures,
that jn that Bataylle weren stout & fers,
wolde not remeven non foot of lond
there as Sonigranx was beten, j vndirstond.
Atte laste this Sonigranx remounted was
with gret sorwe & peyne jn that plas.
thanne began there anon newe bataylle,
For avenged wolde he be, with-owten faylle.
Anon the kyng sonigranx & his meyne
the xlij they hadden envyrownd, Sekerle.
thanne entrede merlyne with his baner
with al þe myht that he myhte ther.
and the cc & .l. knyhtes of þe rounde table,
they weren Sourmontyd, with-owten fable,
and a ful gret pas they comen rydand
to þe banere þat merlyne bar on hande,
and to that part they gonnen drawe,
where-offen merlyne was ryht fawe.

Notwithstanding the 42 fellows,

Sonigrans is at last remounted.

He wants to take revenge. The 42 are surrounded.

Merlin comes to their relief:

the 250 knights, now remounted (cf. l. 14170), arrive (cf. l. 14249), and join him.

Whanne that these cc & .l. knyhtes
to the bataylle weren sembled jn ryhtes,
Amonges Here Enemyes they gonne to Reke,
there many a spere gonne they to-breke.
and whanne here Speres to-broken were,
anon here Swerdis they drowen owt there.
So strong was the bataille, certeinle,
that hit was wondir to behold & se.

There is a wonderful fight.

[leaf 143 d]

On the tothyr partye þe steward cleodalys
with his meyne ful sore fauht, j-wys.
but for non power that was hem among,
here a stale myhten they not kepen ful long,
but sorpharynis to the cyte ward wente
ryht velonusly with his entente.
thanne cam þe two thousend of þe cyte,
that toforn tym jn the chas hadden be.
and whanne they syen the stywardis banere
and with him gret compenie there,
anon they torneden jnto that partye.

In the meantime, Cleodalis' force is driven by Sorfarine towards the city.

They meet the 2000 pursuers (l. 14283).

14624. *was* added above the line.

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These at once slay a thousand heathen;

and jn here goynge thedirward, sekerlye, 14636
they slowen a thousend jn here comeng,
and thanne with cleodalis they maden Restyng.

and there begins a new boisterous battle

thanne there began a newe bataylle,
as j 3ow seye with-owten faylle, 14640
that the Noyse wel herd myhte haue ben
passeng a ful long myle then.

against Sorfarin and his force.

this kyng Sorpharyn hadde on his side
x thousend men that jlke tyde, 14644
and cleodalis hadde on his partye
but fyve thousend, certeynlye.

The 250 knights and the 42 fellows, who fight against Sonigrans,

On the tothir partye was gret fyhtyng
of hem of þe Round table, with-owten lesyng, 14648
and the xlij sowdiours jn fere
a3ens kyng Sonigranx fowhten there,
that a3ens viij thousend helden bataylle,

are in great distress.

and weren at gret Mischef, with-owten faylle; 14652
For they myhten not long Endure
a3ens swich a Meyne, j 3ow Ensure.

Merlin says to Ban they must destroy the five leaders of the hostile army.

thanne Merlyne clepede kyng ban anone,
and to hym he seide ful sone: 14656
"barouns, bachelers, bothe fre & bolde,
what stonde 3e stille & so beholde?
here ben but fyve Geauntis in this stede
that thus this Meyne doth ouer-lede. 14660
weren theke fyve distroyed sone,
thanne were al this bataylle done."

Ban asks where they are.

"what partye ben they," quod kyng ban tho,
"3ondir jn bataylle bope to & fro?" 14664

Merlin says that Ulfin and others struggle with them:

"certes," quod Merlyn, "j schal 3ow telle:
Vlphines, Gyrfles, & bretel the snelle,
Sire kay, & Sire lucauns also,
with hem they fyhten & suffren wo. 14668

"Now follow me, and we will see who does best!"

and behold & seweth now aftyr me,
thanne the sothe there scholen we se,
wich of this compenye best doth him bere;
the sothe thanne scholen we preven there" 14672

14664. This line was omitted and then written down the right margin.

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thussone merlyne faste forth rod,
and these knyhtes non lengere abod,
but forth they entrede jnto þat bataylle,
vj knyhtes ajens xx jeauntis, saun faylle,
that weren passeng owt of mesure.
kyng Ban to-fore rod, j 3ow ensure,
and þe ferst man he mette that day tho,
was kyng Sonygranx, with-owten mo.
kyng Ban jn honde his swerd held,
that al forsoylled was jn that feld
of mennis blood & mennes brayn,
as j 3ow declare Jn certayn.
þerwith vppon the helm he smot him there,
that thorwh the Sercle hit wente ful clere
and thorwh the vysage evene down ryht,
that vppon the left scholdre hit alyht,
that hit fley jnto the feld
bothe the left arm & ek the Scheld.
Thanne made He gret Noyse, & Fowle He ferde,
that fer jnto the ost hit was herde.
And kyng Bors smot marganaus, for soth,
that thorwh the panne hit wente jnto þe teth.

On the tothyr partye kyng Arthour
Ful wel he bar hym jn that Stowr.
he smot a jeaunt thorwh hauberk & scheld,
that he fyl ded down jn the feld.
and vlphyn anothir geaunt slowhe,
Balaater, a strong thef and a towhe.
And Bretel slowh Gordaunt, & kay dendonart;
these jeawntes Slowen they jn here part.
Lucauns slowh maleej, & Gyrfles manadape;
these jeaw[n]tis slowen they, hit was here hape.
And meraungis slowh Sadut jn that plas,
and gornauns kadrus Slowh dolas.
Anon as the hethene Syen these thus slayn,
To flen ful faste they waren ful fayn.
For they seyden hit wolde not avaylle
ajens the cristene to holde bataylle.

Merlin rides ahead; the others follow.

Ban meets king Sonigrans,

hits him on the helm,

and cuts off his left arm.

[leaf 144 *a*]

Boors splits Marganaus' head.

Arthur kills one giant,

Ulfin, another,

Bretel, a third, and so forth.

Now the heathen yield,

despairing of success.

14701. *Gordaũt, o* (?) blotted, illegible. 14704. MS. *jeawtis.*

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Avaunt knyhtes of the table Rownde
and þe two and fourty Soudiowrs jn þat stownde! 14712
Anon the hethene sore abasched they were,
For of hem we[r]en slayn Mochel peple there.
They flee to king Sorfarins, So that faste they gonne forto fle,
that alle the Sowdyours hit Myhte se, 14716
tel to kyng Sorpharyns they comen, j-wys,
who is fighting with Cleodalis, that bataylle held with Cleodalis.
dash through the place of battle, thanne borsten the hethen Jnto that pres,
that non man there ne myhten hem ses, 14720
So harde, that they whiche jn þe place were,
Forsoken here place Maugry here.
and press on to the city. and Neuere they wolden astynte ne abyde,
tyl that to-fore toraysse they comen that tyde. 14724
The citizens are greatly alarmed, Anon thanne the peple of the cyte
wondir Sore affrayed weren, Sykyrle,
seeing neither the king's banner, that the Banere Syen they not than
of here owne worthy kyng leodagan, 14728
wherby thei thowhten thanne anon
that taken or dede they weren Echon.
nor the king himself, On þe tothir partye they syen not here kyng,
that the Sowdeoures hadden be Reskewyng; 14732
wherfore they weren abasched wel sore,
For that here kyng they syen not comen thore.
only the enemies before the gates. and whanne they comen to-fore the town,
thanne alle lost thei wende hadde ben jn virown. 14736
The 6000 Christians, For but vj thousend of cristen ther were
and jresch hethen xij thousend, as ȝe mown here.
in great trouble, fall back to the town. Nedis the Sowdeoures weren at gret Mischef,
So that to the cyte they gonnen Relef. 14740
and euere the cetezeins, the soþe to say,
of þe Sowdeours weren sore aferd, in fay.
They collide afresh, whanne the Sowdeours and here compenye
among the hethen weren Entrid, Sekyrlye, 14744
fight desperately, there began a ful gret stowr

14713. *hethene*, *eth* on erasure.
14714. MS. *weē*.
14724. MS. *tylthat*.
14728. *worthy*, *w* corrected from *k*.—*leodagan*, see footnote to l. 14142.
14729, 14736. *thei*, *i* squeezed in afterwards.

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Ful of angwysch & of dolowr;
the wheche Endured ful longe than,
For there was slayn Ryht Many a Man:
For a thousend there fyllen jn that pres
atte ferste Entre, with-owten les,
that Neuere Recouerede aftyr ageyn,
as j 3ow Seye now jn certeyn.

On the tothir partye, whanne þe knyhtes of the rounde table
and the xlij Sowdeoures, with-owten fable,
hadden discomfyt Sonigrenx the kyng,
and to flyht was put, with-owten lesyng,
they wolden non lengere aftyr hym chase;
For Merlyne hem withheld jn that plase,
and drowh hem jnto on partye
of that feld, ful Sekyrlye,
and to hem alle seide Ryht anon:
" herkeneth now, Lordynges Everichon,
3e scholen non ferthere Sewen hem here,
but doth now as j schal 3ow Lere:
Alyhteth of 3oure hors jn this tyde
Hem to Refreschen, there to Abyde;
For 3owre hors ful wery they be,
al be-swet and be-bled, as 3e Mown se."
and they deden anon his comandement,
as j 3ow Seye, with ful good Entent.

So that there they alyhten alle anon,
and Refresched hem thanne Everichon,
for therto they hadden ful gret Mester,
alle the compenye of hem jn fer.
Anon ther spak kyng leodagan,
and vnto Merlyne Seyde he than:
" Sire, wylen 3e that these goode Men here
with 3oure xlij Myhte ben alle jn fere?"
"3e certis, Sire," quod Merlyne thanne,
" to vs js welcomen Every good Manne.

14748 and kill a thousand men.

14752

As for the knights of the Round Table and the 42 fellows,

14756

14760 they are told by Merlin not to pursue the enemy,

14764 but to alight and rest their horses,

[leaf 114 *b*]

which are weary,

14768 and covered with sweat and blood.

They all do so.

14772

King Leodegan suggests

14776 to Merlin that the 250 and the 42 should be together.

Merlin says that every

14780 good man is welcome to them.

4780. *js*, apparently *jo*.

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For mochel the bettere scholen we do
al jn on wynge to-gederis forto go."
The king tells Hervy of Rivel to join the 42. Anon thanne clepyd kyng leodagan
hervy the Ryvel, his banorer, than,
and preyde hym thanne forto comen Ner
jn compenye with these goode men to dwellen her—
"and 3oure Feleschepe *with* 3ow also,
For jn on compenye now scholen we go."
Hervy gladly obeys: "Ful gladliche, sire," quod hervy Ryvele,
"For Of here compenye vs lyketh ful wel,
3if that so here wylle now be."
"3is," quod kyng leodagan, "certeinle,
For from this day hens forward
but on compenye to ben both styf & hard."
"For good is the fellowship of good men." "depardeux," quod Sire hervy thenne,
"For good is the Feleschepe of Ryht good Menne."

Thanne to-gederis weren they alle
jn on compenye, as gan be-falle.
They start for the city, and Merlyne to-fore be-gan to Ryde;
thanne alle they hym seweden þat ilke tyde.
And whilles they Reden thus jn fere,
as 3e han me herd Rehersen here,
where Cleodalis is upholding the battle against king Sorfarins' men. Al the whille the steward Cleodalis
with vj thousend jn his compenye, j-wis,
a3ens kyng Sorpharynes fawht he tho,
that *with* hym hadde xij thousend Men & Mo.
These fight dispersedly, but Enbataylled non thing they were,
but ay fyhtyng they weren here & there,
ever thinking the Christians will succumb. for they wendyn han Mad an Ende
of Cleodalis Meyne, & so thanne they wende,
For at gret Mischef, certeyin, they were,
they that with Cloadalis weren there,
For jn poynt to 3elden they weren Echone
and Ek here place to forsaken welsone.
Now Merlin's banner is sighted. thanne they lokede hem beside
and Syen Merlynes Baner that tyde,
the dragon that the feer blew so hygh,

14803. MS. *Althe.* 14806. *hym* added in the left margin.
14810. *they* added in the right margin.

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as hit hem Semede, jn-to the Skyhe,
that al the Eyr semede on fyire there;
Swich wondris they syen that þere were.
And whanne that the ladyes vppon þe cyte walle
beheldeu Merlynes Bancre alle,
anon they cryden to Cleodalys,
that vndir the walles fawht, j-wys:
"ha, Cleodalis, of good comfort thou be,
For here cometh socour anon to the!"

The ladies on the city wall cry to Cleodalis: "Be of good cheer; for help is coming'"

And whanne Cleodalis herd hem so crye
that on the walles stooden an hye,
he loked anon toward the valeye,
and beheld where thanne comen theye.
Thanne wyste he wel that jn tyme comenge
that sone scholde he hauen Socourenge,
and thankede god omnipotent,
that thider Socour hath hym sent.
thanne clepede he his Men jn vyrown,
that abowtis hym comen wel son:
"now mowen ȝe ben bothe glad & save,
For here comen they þat we desired haue."
thanne Cleodalis for gret joye of herte
Amonges the hethene than gan he sterte,
And His Meyne Forth With hym;
thanne wax the bataylle wondir Grym.

Cleodalis looks towards the valley, thanks God, calls his men, and makes another rush. [leaf 144 *c*]

with that cam on this othir Meyne,
and of hem Slowen ful gret plente:
.ccc. they Slowen atte ferste set
Jn here ferst comenge, with-owten let,
that neuere to lyve Restored ageyn
More thanne they that jn helle ben, certeyn;
Ne non departeson they Maden, j-wys,
til they comen to þe steward Cleodalis.

Merlin's companions arrive, slay at once 300, and straight make their way to Cleodalis.

Whanne they weren Entred alle jn fere
anon Merlyne gan forto ascryen there:
"haa, lordynges, knyhtes, & bachelere,
let se how ȝe konne beren ȝow here.

Merlin exhorts everyone to do his best.

14853. *haa* corrected from *and* (*h* added in the margin, *d* erased).

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For ȝe ben comen now to ȝoure asay ;
therfore let now se how ȝe konne play." 14856

Arthur laughingly calls this fight a good joke.

whanne that kyng Artheur herde this,
To kyng Ban & kyng Bors he seyde, j-wys,
Ryht hertely lawghenge jn his Manere,
to tho two kynges thanne seide he there 14860
that—" neuere a bettere boorde was
thanne now is be-gonnen jn this plas."

Merlin asks them to stop joking; there will be time enough for that all the week.

thanne seide Merlyne to hem anon :
" beleve ȝoure boordyng now Everichon, 14864
For al this wyke ȝe Mown jn fere
bothe Lawghen & boorden & Make good chere."

They dash against the enemies.

whanne they vndirstod Merlyne So speke,
amonges here Enemyes gonne they Reke 14868
welful of jre and Maultalent.
there began a gret Stour present :
the sorrest that was of al theke day,
at that tyme there began, jn fay. 14872

Arthur excels.

There began Arthewr a Merveyllous thing
be his owne handis as jn werkyng,
as Merlyne hym cownseyllede at that tyde,
that al the world of hym spak so wyde. 14876

Gonnore and the other ladies

Gonnore, that on the walles was than,
the dowhter of kyng leodagan,
alle the ladyes and þe Maydenis also,
to hevene ward here hondis heldyn tho, 14880

weepingly pray for his saving,

and preyden for Artheuris Savaciown,
that with Enemyes was be-set jn virown,
and wepten for Rowthe and for pyte.

the Christians being so few and so young.

So Manye hethene aȝens crystyente 14884
Merveille to suffren there hit was,
So ȝonge as they weren jn that plas.
but kyng Arthewr amongis hem Echon
distroyede most of alle here fon. 14888

With his sword Calibrand,

For [with] his swerd, that hyhte Calybrond,
whiche that he bar þere jn his hond,
bothe on þe Ryhte syde & on the lefte

he kills

Manye hedis & scholderis he hem berefte, 14892

14878. See footnote to l. 14142. 14889. MS. *for his.*

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legges, armes, & thyes also; and maims,
bothe knyhtes & hors to grownde gonne go.
he made here helmes fleen jnto þe feld
and knyhtes ded fallen vndir here scheld.
Ek the Sercles, that weren mad of Stel, cutting even through steel.
ayens his strok holden myhten non del.
but evere abowtes hym good warde þere was
hym forto saven there jn that plas.
For ayens kyng Bors and kyng Ban Boors and Ban are irresistible;
non maner of armure myhte duren than.
thanne so they wrowhten there jn fere,
that here strokis dorste non man abyden there,
what of hem of the rownde table so are their companions,
and of the xlij Sowdiowrs, with-owten fable.
For amongis hem was forzeten non thyng,
whanne that they comen to here bekeryng.

Ful strong was þe bataylle and the stowr The violent battle outside the city walls
that to-forn þe cyte of Torayse was þat owr
(and every knyht jn his owne degre
Ful boldly there hym bar, ful Sykirle),
and dured al the day, as j zow telle, lasts all day.
tyl that hit rang with evesong belle.
that So nygh they weren to the cyte,
Not thens A stones cast, Sykerle. [leaf 144 *d*]
but whanne hit cam to þe owr of noon tho, At the ninth hour,
of al that day fowhten they not So, 3000 foes are fallen.
that xij thowsend Jnto nyne was browht;
at that tyme so sore the crystene þere fowht.
Whanne Sorpharynes Sawhe that hit wente so, Sorfarins swears he will be avenged;
anon be his creaunce Swor he tho
that he wolde neuere from that grownd gon,
tyl that he were venged of his fon.
Anon he clepede his kynnes-men than, he calls his kinsmen,
Sire Gaydone & also Sire Sotybran,
Sire Senebant & Sire Claryown,
Sire mallors & sire Freellent jn virown;
They weren knyhtes bothe goode & bolde,

14929. *They*, *y* squeezed in afterwards.

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as jn this Storye here hit is tolde.

makes an attack,
they dressed hem forth alle jn fere
amongẽs theke worthy Sowdyowrs there.

and throws down Hervy of Rivel,
hit happede kyng Sorpharyn to Meten tho
Sire hervy the Ryvel, as hit gan go.
and Sire Ryvel he smot so sore that tyde,
that down to þe Erthe gan he glyde.

Ankor (Antron),
and aftyr Ancor he smot also,
that down to grownde thanne gan he go.

and Girfles.
Sethen Sire Gyrfles smot he there,
that hors & Man to grownd he bere.

Each of his followers unhorses an adversary.
and Ech of his felawes smot a knyht,
that to the grownde he fyl anon Ryht;
thanne Ech of his felawes bar hym so,
and Maden here aduersarye to grownde go.
but there nas non wondid to þe ded
that felden were jn thyke sted.

Thus Lucans, Kay, Bretel, and several others
Sire Lucans þe botelers happed thanne thus,
Sire Meraungis & sire Gorvayns Caradus,
Sire blyobers, sire Galeys luchauns, as telleth this tale,
Sire kay þe steward & sire Guniret of lambale,
Ek Sire Godam and Sire staungot,
the Nithe was sire Bretel, wel j wot:

are thrown to the ground.
alle these jn the feld j-feld they were.
but non man wyste the sothe there,
whethir be strok of lawnce hit was
or be defawt of here hors jn that plas.

There is great din and blinding dust.
thanne a ful gret noysse there began
and a wondir gret dowst forsothe than,
that non of hem othir Myhten se,
as this storye Reherseth certeynle.
but Evere the hethene peynede hem faste
the cristene to distroyen Jn alle haste.

The unhorsed knights defend themselves on foot,
Anon these worthy Nyne knyhtes
vppon here Feet keuerede anon Ryhtes.
with here Naked swerdis on honde
Styfly to-gederis gonne they stonde,
and Fowhten with hem with alle here Myht

14935. */mot*, *m* blotted (corrected from *no*?).

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For there began thanne a ful strong fyht.
but lytel hit avayllede at that Tyde,
For the jeauntes on hem ful sore gonnen abyde.
thanne cam Merlyne to here socour
with his Baner on hande jn that stowr.
Anon kyng Sorpharynes, that jeaunt, tho
To kyng leodagan thanne gan he go,
and smot hym Evene amyddis the scheld,
that hors and Man Fyl jn the Feld.
So lowe bar Sorpharynes his spere there:
kyng leodagan[s] hors Slowh he there,
So that bothe they lyen atte Grownde,
kyng leodagan & his hors, that stownde.
whanne they of the cyte behelden this,
Gret sorwe they Maden & cryden, j-wys,
For they wendyn kyng leodagan hadde be ded;
So sore he Fyl there jn that sted.
thanne to here Reskews Eche Man wente,
and sore they fowhten with good Entente.
whanne that kyng Artheur herde this
of that stowt jeawnt & Grym, j-wys,
That feld hadde fowre so worthy Men,
kyng Artheur swor anon Ryht then
that on þeke jeaunt hym-self wolde asaye
To Weten Whethyr of Hem Bettere cowde playe.
Jnto that Reng kyng arthewr wente
with a boystous spere on honde, veramente,
the hed ful Scharpe and wel j-grownde,
and forth he Rod jn that Stownde.
hit happede that ayens hym cam kyng ban,
and to kyng Artheur there seide he than:
"with whom thenken ye to josten here?
Not with this jeaunt jn non Manere!
For to yow he is to strong jn this Felde,
For ye ben yit but of yong Elde.
but let now Me ayens him go
Forto asayen what j May do.
For j am Eldere of age than ye

but cannot do much.

Merlin approaches.

Sorfarins rides against Leodegan,

and fells man and horse.

The people in the city lament, thinking that the king is dead.

Arthur, hearing of the giant's exploits,

swears to have a try with him,

[leaf 145 *a*]

and rides forth spear in hand.

Ban meets him,

dissuades him,

and offers to go in his stead.

14978. MS. *leodagan hors.* 14983. See footnote to l. 14142.
14998. *to*, MS. *two.*

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and ek, j trowe, strengere, certeinle."

But Arthur perseveres.

" Now God Forbede," quod kyng artheur tho,
" that Evere ony Man but j hym go to.
For the More þat dowted the jeaunt Js,
the sonnere asayen hym j schal, j-wys.
For Elles My-selve j scholde neuere knowe
what j Myhte don anothyr throwe."

Merlin, seeing the delay, harshly tells Arthur to hurry.

Whanne Merlyne Sawh Arthewr Taryen So,
wondirly he ascryede hym anon tho:
" what Taryest thou here, þou fowle coward?
dredyst thou the jeaunt jn this part?
Go, coward, and do as thou scholdest do."

Arthur feels ashamed,

and whanne kyng Artheur herde Merlyne speken so,
and that coward he clypede hym thanne,
Ful sore aschamed was þat worthy Manne.

and rides on.

Anon he prekede jnto that pres,
that for non thing ne wolde he ses.

Ban remonstrates with Merlin.

thanne anon bespak kyng Ban,
and þere to Merlyne seyde he than:
" Me thynketh hit is not Ryht wel do
to chargen Artheur forto don so,
So 3ong a Man as Arthewr now js
a3ens that gret devel to josten, j-wys."

Merlin tells him not to mind, but to follow after with Boors and Ulfin.

" there-offen non warde," quod Merlyn tho,
" but tak 3oure spere and aftyr hym 3e go,
and 3owre brothir and Vlphyn jn compenye;
aftyr hym faste that 3e don hye."
his comandement they fulfylden in haste,
also swithe as here hors Myhten laste.

When Sorfarins sees Arthur, he rides against him.

whanne kyng Sorpharynes Sawh Arthewr there,
anon a3ens hym he gan forto bere.

All look anxiously on.

And whanne they of the Reng beheldeu this,
thanne hoveden they alle stylle, j-wys.
For of Arthewr they hadden gret drede,
lest that the jeawnt hym scholde ouer-lede.

The spears burst.

So sore to-Gederis they Metten atte laste,
that bothe here speres there al to-barste.

15011. MS. *My felvel.* 15017. *and*, *a* corrected from *d*.
15033. *haſte* corrected from *hye*. 15042. MS. *alto barſte*.

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Sorpharynes Arthewr jn þe flanke hyrte,
that a lytel hit gan hym smerte.
and Artheur smot him so sore ageyn
thorwh Scheld and hauberk, jn certeyn,
that thorwgh the chyne the spere owt glod
an arme lengthe behynde, Er hit with-stod,
that bothe hors and Man to grownde they wente
Evene tope ouer tayl thanne, veramente.

Arthur is slightly hurt in the side;

Sorfarins is pierced,

and falls.

These Justes beheld this lady Gonnore,
the dowhter of kyng Leodegan, þat was thore,
as sche atte a fenestre wyndowe lay;
sche beheld al theke bataylle that day,
and Merveyllede what this Bacheler was,
that there so wel bar hym jn that plas.
Non wyht his Name cowde tellen that owr,
but that hit was on a worthy Sowdyowr—
"that 3oure fadyr hath now with-holde;
what so Evere he be, he is a Man ful bolde."
"Sertes," quod the Mayden tho,
"From goode men nedis cam he fro.
For but 3if of hygh blood that born he were,
he cowde neuere so handelen neþer scheld ne spere."
So that al thyke day jnto the Ende
of the sowdiours to speken sche wolde not lende.

Gonnore, watching the combat,

marvels at the young man

whose name nobody knows.

She says he must needs be of high descent,

and keeps on speaking of the soldiers.

Anon kyng Bors and kyng Ban
Jnto that Reng anon Entred than,
Eche of Hem With a spere Bothe Myhty and strong,
with hedis scharpe j-grownden, bothe stordy and long.
There kyng Bors smot Sortybran,
and kyng ban smot Claryel than;
Vlphynes smot Sire Gaydon jn þat plas,
that of his lyf bereft he was.
so that these jeauntes to dethe weren browht;
thanne Eche Man his Enemy owt þere sowht.
3it forthere these thre gonnen to Ryde,
So that eche of hem anoþer slowhe that tyde.
the ton slowh Moras, the tother Laundon,
the thrydde senebawnt he slowh anon,

Ban and Boors approach;

[leaf 145 b]

they strike two enemies;

Ulfin kills a third.

Each of the three slay one more.

15063. *but* added above the line.

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So that stylle they leften there,
tyl that awey they were born on bere.

Arthur attacks Mallore

Anon kyng Artheur his swerd gan drawe,
For ɛft to fyhten he was ful fawe.
Sire ᴍallore there he smot that day
thorwh-out the helm, the sothe to say,
For that he lay vppon kyn[g] Ban;
ful bytterly he smot hym than,

and Freelent, who try to slay Ban.

and so he dede Sire Freelent,
that bothen purposeden with good ᴇntent
For to han had kyng bannes hed
Evene from the body jn that sted.
For the ton his helm wolde han of drawe,
the toþer with a ᴍas wold han hym Slawe.
thanne lefte not kyng Artheur for non of this,

Mallore's head flies off.

but welsone ᴍallorez hed he hadde, j-wys,
and ᴍad hit flen jnto the feld
bothe from body and ᴇk from scheld.

Freelent

Whanne Freelent Sawh his felawe ded,
that was his cosyn, jn that sted,

lifts his mace;

his ᴍas he gan lyften ful hye
kyng Artheur to han smeten, Sekerlye.

Arthur throws up his shield.

Artheur his scheld threw vpe anon,

The blow makes the shield drop,

that þe strok hym scholde not lyhten vppon.
and so sore he smot jn that tyde,
that jnto þe feld þe scheld gan glyde

and descends on Arthur's shoulder.

and vppon the lefte scholdere decendyd adowne,
that on þe hors ɴekke hit stynte wel son.

Freelent tries another blow; but Arthur evades,

and vpe azen freellent wolde han rekured his ᴍas;
anothyr thowhte Artheur jn that plas.
he smot his hors with his speres tho,

makes a fresh attack, and slits Freelent's head.

and azen to Freellent gan he go,
and vppon the helm hym hytte þere jn hy,
that Jnto the ɢorget hit wente ful ɴy.

The heathen cry out in dismay.

thanne the hethene ɢonnen forto crye,
For sore aferd weren they, sekerlye.
For socowr non hadden they thar

15087. MS. *kyn.* 15112. *ffreellent*, *r* corrected from *e*.
15113. MS. *an hy.*

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but only of Raundolk, þat the baner bar.
to hym Rod kyng Ban wel swithe,
and a good strok hym Rawhte ful blythe,
that bothe the arm and baner also
jnto the feld bothe flowen tho.
thussone welfaste þese theves gonne crye,
and aweyward faste they gonne hem hye.
hanne the chas so longe dyde laste,
yl thyke day was al apaste.
So that many men j-slayn ther were,
that of th[e] ix thowsend þat weren there,
Nas left but .v. thousend, þe sothe to say,
whiche that faste gonnen flen here way.
and to kyng Ryown they wenten ful faste,
where as at þe sege he was ful preste,
and tolden kyng Ryown Everydel
how that be hem hit be-fyl,
and of the grete Mortalite
that amonges hem was, ful sekerle.
hanne swor kyng Ryown be his Sewrte
þat he wolde not owt of that contre,
Tyl he hadde taken kyng Leodagan
And Jn His presown to Hauen Hym than.

Their banner-bearer is dismembed by Ban.

Then they flee;

the others pursue.

Only 5000 escape;

they repair to king Rion, at the besieged city (ll. 13648), and tell him what has happened.

He swears not to leave the country, till he has captured king Leodegan.

[leaf 145 c]

Thanne sente kyng Ryown jnto his lond
aftyr More Meyne, as j vndirstond,
thorwh-owt denmark, al that contre,
bothe high & lowgh, of Eche degre,
and viaunde jnowh with hem to brynge,
that May two ȝer to-gederis ben durenge
For cc thousend of Fyhtyng Men;
that vytaylle mowe Sufficen than.
For that werre he wolde begynne wel strong
and vigerously werren hem among.
So that they sembleden Every day,
that with-jnne a Mounthe, [the sothe] forto say,
cc thousend and Fyfty Men

King Rion sends to Denmark for more people

and two years' provision

for 200,000 men.

Within a month 250,000 men are assembled,

15124. *hem*, MS. *hym*. 15128. MS. *th ix*.
15132. þ^e daubed. 15134. *hem*, *e* corrected from *y*.
15148. MS. *mowi*. 15152. MS. *Mouthe forto say*.

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with-jnne that Mounthe weren sembled than,
amongst whom 20 kings, of wheche xx kynges ther were
To kyng Ryown comen there.
with plenty of wine and food, Gret karyage they browhten with hem also
of wynes, of vytaylle, as was forto do.
so as to render forays unnecessary. So that here ost they kepten jn fere,
that for non vyaunde ferreyen scholden they there,
but ȝif hit be jn-to on partye;
For plente of viaunde hadden they, Sekerlye.
The city is assailed vigorously. Faste they asaylleden the cyte there,
but they with-jnne of hem hadden non fere,
But it is big and strong: For the cyte was bothe byg and strong.
But skars of vetaylle was hem among,
only famine is threatening. that was here drede for Enfamyneng,
lest the Sege were longe dureng.
thus cam Socour thanne Every day
To kyng Ryown, the sothe to Say.
For welsore agreved he was
of the Meyne he hadde lost jn that plas.
Now we will leave this, Now leveth of this Mater here,
Of kyng Ryown & of his ost jn fere
and of hem with-jnne the cyte.
and speak of king Arthur and his companions. And of kyng Arthewr speke now we
and of his felawes jn compenye;
Now to that Mater let vs faste hye.

This Storye here declareth a newe tale,
how these hethene jeauntes weren browht in bale,
The people of Toraise are full of joy to see the heathen discomfited by so small a body of men. and how glad that they of the cyte
and joyful weren, whanne they gonnen fle,
Ek that so lytel a compenye
hem hadde j-scomfyted, certeinlye,
that jn al but vj thousend an ccc were;
ayens xv thousend they fowhten there.
and the scomfyture only hit was
be Merlynes helpe and goddis gras.
The pursuers return to Toraise. whanne the hethen they hadde chased jnto þe Nyht,
thanne to Torayse they torneden anon Ryht,
where as was kyng leodagan;
Ful joyful and Merye weren they than.

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For leodagannes men hadden hym vp take,
whilles the Sowdiours wrowhten the hethen wrake.
And whanne Leodegan wiste the Sowdiowrs comenge, — King Leodegan goes to meet them.
azens hem he wente jn cowntrynge. 15196
Wondir gret joye thanne made the kyng,
whanne they to-gederis comen jn metyng.
But Whanne Sire Antron And Girflet they fownden þere, [leaf 145 *d*]
Sire kay & Sire Lucawns the Botelere, 15200
and alle here oþer Feleschepe, bothe hol & sownd, — All rejoice.
thanne weren [they] joyful vppon that grownd.
For they wenden, ded that they hadden be
oþer ellis taken presoner, certeyinle. 15204
and they hadden wonne good gret plente; — The rich spoil is sent to the soldiers.
Anon kyng leodagan, Sekerle—
anon to the Sowdeowrs hit was to sent,
with that good hem forto present. 15208
For better he wolde, and he bettere myhte do,
but natheles that thedyr sent he tho.

Whanne they seyen the grete curtesye — The soldiers thankfully
that kyng leodegan dede openlye, 15212
they hym thankede a thouse[n]d Sythe,
and to that messenger seyden as blythe:
"we thanken the kyng of his gret sonde;
let hym depart yt forth Jn his londe! 15216 decline the gift.
and anothyr tyme, whanne we hauen nede,
we wylen resceyven that he vs bede."
thanne cam merlyne Faste anon, — But Merlin asks them to accept it.
and to the thre kynges gan he gon, 15220
and bad hem Resceyven ouer alle thyng
the presentes that to hem sente þe kyng.
So they hit took, as merlyn hem bad, — Then they do so, and distribute it amongst the people.
and amonges þe peple distrebucioun they mad, 15224
and leften not the valw of on peny
To here owne partis, ful Sekerly.

15196. *hem*, *e* corrected from *y*.
15200. *lucawns*, *c* more like an *s*. At the end of *the* there is something like a daubed *a*. 15202. MS. *werē joyful*.
15207. The first *to* added above the line.
15213. MS. *athoufed*. 15216. MS. *departyd*.
15521. MS. *boden hem Refceyved*.

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All praise the soldiers;

So that alle men of that contre
Tho Sowdyowrs preyseden ful hertele.
So that the contre repleynsched was abowte
of þe goodis þat they 3oven, with-owten dowte.

even such as never saw them.

For hem that the Sowdeours neuere Sye,
mochel worschepe hem spoken, certeynlye,
and al for here largenesse & here good dede
thorwh-owt the rem of hem gan sprede.
And al this was be merlynes cownsaille,
as j 3ow Seye with-owten faylle.

Arthur gives his host and hostess money, clothing, and horses.

Artheur to his ost he 3af that day
bothe Richesse, and Robes, and many palfray;
that alle the dayes aftyr of here lyve
moche bettere myhten they bothen thryve.

After the distribution of the spoil,

Whanne that kyng Arthour hadde thus j-do,
and alle the richesses departyd so,
that vppon the hethene they hadden gete
(hit was departyd, er he wolde lete),

the soldiers enter the town.

thanne they gonnen entren jnto þe town
with al here feleschepe jn virowu.

King Leodegan invites them to his palace,

thanne seide kyng Leodegan tho
to alle the Sowdiowrs, as they gonne go,
and wolde non Suffren with al his myhte
Jn that town there Forto alyhte
Sauf only at his owne paleys;
he hem besowhte, with-owten les.

to stay with him and the knights of the Round Table.

Nether neuere owt of his compenye
he ne wolde not Suffren hem, trewelye,
but with the knyhtes of the rownde table
with hem jn compenye to ben, with-owten fable.

They unarm.

And whanne vnarmed that they were,

The king sends his daughters with rich garments

kyng leodagan his dowhter to hem sente there
with the richest robes that he hadde,
dame gonnore, his dowhter, to hem ladde,
and hot water to waschen hem Jn

and hot water for washing.

jn bacenis of gold bothe goode & fyn.

15228. *hertele*, the last *e* corrected from *y*.
15247. *thãne* corrected from *that*.
15258. *dowhter*, *r* corrected from *t*.

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but Arthewr of hem wolde taken non Servyse,
Tyl kyng leodagan comaunded jn alle wyse
and Merlyne Bad hem there also
The Servyse of hem to taken tho.
So that the gentyl damysele anon
whisch tho thre kynges be on and on,
bothe Artheuris Body and his Nekke also
and face, & with a towaylle wypte hem tho.
And Ek bothe kynges jn the Same Manere
that Gentyl Gonnore wesch Ryht There.
and the tothyr Gonnore, þat begeten was
on cleodalis wyf with-jnne his plas,
Servede al the tothyr compenye
With Helpe of othere Damyselys, certeynlye.
whanne that Gonnore Leodaganes dowhtyr, J-wys,
these thre kynges hadde Servyd thus,
thanne hire owne fadyr, kyng leodagan,
hym forto waschen this Mayden gan than.
and whanne that thus j-waschen they were,
Gonnore to Ech of hem a Mentyl took there.
kyng Arthewr was a Man ful of Bewte,
and that beheld this Mayden, ful certeynle.
And kyng Artheur beheld hyre also;
So Mochel of Bewte hadde sche tho.
thanne so they spoken betwixen hem tweyne,
that to Arthour this damysele gan Seyne
that glad jn herte sche was, Sekerle,
of swich a worthy body beloued to be.

Thanne whanne al this was J-do,
on the Morwe to Mete scholden they go.
So that they weschschen & seten a-down,
these worthy thre kynges & amonges hem non.
And alle the knyhtes of þe Rownde table
benethen the Sowdiours seten, sauns fable.
but bothe kyng Bors and kyng Ban
betwixen hem bothe setten Artheur than.
For they deden hym ful gret honour,

15264 Arthur will accept no service, but Leodegan and Merlin persuade him.

15268 Gonnore washes and wipes the three kings.

15272

Her half-sister and other damsels serve the rest of the company.

15276 [leaf 146 a]

Gonnore also washes her father,

15280

and brings each one a mantle.

She notices Arthur's

15284 beauty,

and Arthur sees hers.

15288

She would fain be loved by such a man.

15292 At table,

the knights are placed

15296 beneath the soldiers.

Arthur sits between Boors and Ban.

15268. *&* crossed out before *and*.

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For he was a Man of gret valour.
King Leodegan notices the respect paid to Arthur. kyng leodagan took gret kep tho
of the Reuerence they gonne hym do,
and vndirstood wel be here Servyse
that here souereyn he was jn alle wyse,
He wonders who he is, and Merveyllede gretly what he scholde be,
For fayn wolde he han wyst, Sykerle.
and wishes that he would marry his daughter. and to hym-Self he thowhte Ryht there
that he hadde weddid his dowhter gonnore.
For he sawh neuere Man of swich Entaylle,
but of hygh blood he were, saun3 faille.
"Or perhaps the Lord has sent me a spirit in man's likeness, "Oper ellis the goode Lord jn Maieste
thys man for socour hath sent to Me,
a spiryt to ben jn Mannes lyknesse
this Rewm to defenden from distresse,
j wot wel, not only for the loue of Me,
for the sustenance of Christianity." but for the Sustenaunce of crystyente
and Ek holy chirche Forto Meynteyne."
thus to hym-Self kyng Leodagan gan seyne.

Leodegan muses on his wonderful rescue At that Mete Mochel thowhte than
this worthy kyng Leodagan
how that he Reskewed was, jn feye,
with xlij felawes jn the valeye,
from imprisonment, that hym Reskewed of .v. hundred Men,
whiche that to preson ward ladden hym then,
and browhten hym a-geyn with gret Richesse,
and Slowen alle tho that weren jn that prese.
So that for thowht that he was jnne ther,
and eats nothing. Nothyng he Ete at his diner.
Hervy of Rivel Thanne that aspyde hervy the Revelle,
and þere-offen hadde Merveylle Euerydelle.
goes to the king, Anon to the table to hym he wente,
and there hym aresoned, veramente.
and asks him he seide that neuere sethen he was bore—
"Say j 3ow neuere of swich chere before,
Ne neuere abasched So, jn good fay,
as 3e ben here this jlke day.

15303. *wel*, *w* corrected from an uncompleted *b*.
15312. *thys*, *y* corrected from *e*; *man* added above the line.

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For ȝe owhten gret joye to make — to be cheerful for the gueste' sake.
only for these goode mennis sake;
and ȝe faren wondirly for the nones,
as thowgh ȝe weren not of these wones." 15340
Anon kyng leodegan hym bethowhte, — Leodegan explains why he is so pensive,
how merveillously this man hadde wrowhte,
and Seyde: "hervy, my dere Frende,
J thenke here of a wondyr ende, 15344
of the beste dede of on worthy man,
that of al the world now tellen j kan.
wherfore j ne may not with-holden me, — and says he cannot help it.
but on hym to thenken, certeynle. 15348
and therfore, goode Sire, so blame me nowht,
For this day for me hath he Sore wrowht."
"Sire, ȝit may j that leven ryht wel, — Hervy asks him to put away all pensiveness for the time. [leaf 146 b]
But At this time ȝe most Leven hit eche del. 15352
and whanne tyme cometh, thenk what ȝe lyst,
For what now ȝe thenken, may not be wyst.
but to hem maketh joye and ek Solas,
For ȝe han gret cause here Jn this plas. 15356
therfore abaschscheth non thing ȝoure chere,
For aȝens hem ȝe mistaken ȝow here."
"Sauf *vostre* grace," quod kyng Leodagan tho, — Leodegan promises to do so.
"jn non wise that wil j now do. 15360
Now goth and Sittyth down to ȝoure mete,
and al pensifnesse now schal j lete."

Thanne Sette hym sire hervy down to mete — Hervy returns to his seat.
amonges his felawes, with-owten lete, 15364
and the kyng to tho Barowns spak ful meryely. — The king speaks merrily.
thanne Gonnere Leodagans dowhter, trewely, — Gonnore serves him with wine.
of wyn Servyd hire fadir jn a cowpe of goold
and kyng Artheur on knees; þat lette sche nold. 15368 — In serving Arthur, she kneels.
kyng Artheur here beheld ryht wel, — He admires her features.
and of alle hyre fetures hym lykede eche del.
hym thowhte sche was the fairest lady
of that Lond or of al breteygne, sekerly. 15372
that mayden al dischevele sche wente, — Her dishevelled hair,

15351. *ȝit* added in the left margin. 15368. MS. *kyyng*.
15369. *here*, the first *e* corrected from *y*.

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her figure. with strawht Sydes, & Myddel ful gente.
On hire hed a chapelet of gold was set
Ful of precyous stones, with-owten let. 15376

her complexion. hyre vysage was bothe Bryht and schene,
Entermellyd whyt and with Red betwene
Ful Naturely, as hit Scholde be,
Neþer More ne lasse be qwantyte; 15380

her arms hire scholderis wel large, hyre armes ful gent,
bothe longe and smale, verament;
with a Merveillous faire Schapen Body

and legs. and þerto Fayre schapen loynes, Sekerly; 15384

her feet with smale feet wel schapen & gent:
Fairere cowde non Man devysen, verament;

and hands. hire handis white, fyngres longe and smale:

are delightful. of hire bewte joye hit is to tellen ony tale. 15388

And yet her virtues are still greater than her beauty. ȝif that this Mayde hadde al this Bewte,
ȝit hadde sche dubble fold moche more bownte,
bothe prowesse, largenesse, & kurtesye,
of gret wyt and valour, Sekerlye. 15392

Arthur, Whanne kyng Artheur thus beheld this Mayde,
as tofore this tyme j haue ȝow sayde,

seeing her delicious breasts he beheld hire pappes smale & gent,
bothe harde & Rownde, verament; 15396
as two smale apples Semed they there.

and her flesh, white as snow hire Flesch was whyt and wondirly clere;
there nas neuere snow, þat snew on grownde,
whittere thanne hire flesch that stownde; 15400

and red as drops of blood, and as bryht coloured forto se
as dropes of blod jn snow, certeinle.
So that kyng Artheur, verament,

covets her with all his desire. that Mayden coveytede with al his Entent, 15404
and anon for love he tornede his chere;
but that parceyved not the two kynges there.

She offers him the wine, and says: "Drink, Sir Bachelor! This lady hym profered the wyn Ryht thanne:
"drynketh, Sire Bacheler, and as a worthi Manne! 15408

15377. *hyre*, *y* corrected from *e*.
15381. *hyr'*, *h* corrected from *a*.
15388. *is* added above the line.—*ony*, *o* corrected from *a*.
15394. MS. *tyme this tyme*, the former *tyme* crossed out.

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Sire, blameth me not of My Servyse,
For 3owre name knowe j not jn non wyse,
but oþer Name of 3ow knowe j non,
and 3if that j dede, j wolde Rehersen son.
Nomore abaschsched be 3e of 3oure Mete
thanne 3e ben 3oure armure to lete,
whiche was wel sene 3isterday
vppon the .v. hundred jn þe valay,
From whom 3e reskewede my fadyr dere.
Sire, drynketh, j preye 3ow, & Maketh good chere!"
he hym tornede anon Gentylmanly wyse,
and seide: "damysele, graunt Mercy of 3oure Servyse,
and graunt me grace, Er that J dye,
3oure Gwerdoun to qwyten, as 3e ben worthye."
" sire, 3e han me qwyt a thousend fold more
thanne j can Rehersen 3ow before.
For What mown 3e More Don For Me
thanne My fadir to Reskewen from his Enyme?
what thorwgh 3ow & 3oure compenye
From preson 3e deliuered hym, trewelye,
and 3it More, sire Bacheler, dyden 3e
My fadyr, that whanne feld was he
aforn the 3ates of this towne,
Sone hym recouered with Renowne.
For 3e slowhen hym that him so bet,
that he lay ded there at his fet,
and putten 3oure-seluen jn aventure
of 3oure lyf, J 3ow Ensure.
For so Sore 3e wrowhten jn that bataylle,
that alle they fledden, with-owten faylle."

Excuse me for not saying your name: I know it not.

Now be as brave at your meat as before in the fight."

Arthur replies: "Many thanks! May I be able to requite you."

Gonnore says: "You have done so, more than I can tell. [leaf 146 c]

You have saved my father from prison,

and rescued him when he was felled,

staking your own life,

and putting all to flight."

Jn this Maner spak this Maydyn 3yng
To that 3onge bacheler, Artheur the kyng.
but non word he ne spak ageyn,
but took the cowpe & drank, certeyn,
and sethen that damysele to sitten comaunded he,
that so longe to-forn hym kneled on hire kne;
but that hire Fadyr ne wolde not so,

Arthur silently takes the cup and drinks.

He asks the kneeling damsel to sit; but her father does not allow it.

15412. *that*, the second *t* blotted.
15425. *mown* added above the line.

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For with alle Reuerence that he myhte do,
he wolde that Bacheler Servyd had be;
For his name knew he not, certeinle.

At the end of the meal,
And whanne that the clothes J-drawen were,
and ek that they hadde waschen there,

Ban asks king Leodegan
thanne anon be-spak kyng Ban
To that kyng there, Leodagan.
thanne kyng Ban be-gan to spelle,
and to kyng leodagan he gan to telle:

why he has not married his daughter
"Sire, j me Merveille Mochel now, trewelye,
of on thyng that j se with Myn Eye,
and of 3ow, that ben so wys a Man,
that 3oure dowhter Maryen 3e ne kan.
For sche hath age, wit, and discressioun

to a man of renown, who could help him to defend his land,
to ben weddid to ony hygh Man of renown,
that 3oure lond Myhte helpe to defende,
Sethen god no mo children doth 3ow sende,

and be his heir.
3oure Eyr to ben aftyr 3oure day,
3oure lond to gouernen and hauen for ay."

Leodegan says he has been prevented by the war.
"Now certis," seyde kyng Leodagan tho,
"Ne hadde þe werre j-ben, hit hadde be do;
For hit ful sore hath greved Me.
kyng Ryown of Yrlond, Sykerle,
and of denmark also, the bolde,

which has lasted seven years:
thys vij 3er werre with me hath he holde,
and neuere j ne kan Bryngen hit to an Ende.
for sethen þat tyme non Man hidir cam wende
to whom that j myhte my dowhter take
Me to defenden, Myn Enemyes to wrake.

but if he could find a worthy bachelor,
but so me god helpe, ful wytterly:
and ony worthy 3ong bacheler fynden Myhte j,
that jn armes were goode and Sure,
and that with travaylle he myhte Endure
and my werres forto Meynteyngne,

he should like his daughter to have him,
Swych on j wolde my dowhter hadde, certeyngne,
and al my Lond aftyr My deces,
that j myhte lyven jn Reste & pes;

even if he were not of high birth.
al thowh he were of non hygh lynage,

15448 15452 15456 15460 15464 15468 15472 15476 15480

15453. *leo* crossed out before *Ban*.
15454. *telle*, the first *e* corrected from an uncompleted *h*.

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of hygnesse of Lordschepe, ne of gret parage.
and wolde god hit were now fullyche j-wrowht,
as that j now thynke jn my thowht,
er that thre dayes fully don wende,
that Mater wolde j bryngen to an ende,
To Ryht a fair ȝong Bacheler;
boþe the beste and þe worthiest this is owher.
For j knowe ful wel, certeynly,
that he is a Mochel More heyghere Man than j."
Anon toward kyng Bors loked Merlyn than,
and to hym a signe sone Make he be-gan
that for kyng Artheur spak he tho;
And certeynly so gan he do.

Could he have his wish.

the matter would be quickly settled

with the best of bachelors.

Merlin gives Boors a sign that Leodegan is alluding to Arthur

Thanne gonnen they to speken of othyr thyng,
where-offen Sory was Leodegan the kyng,
that he ne spak no more of that Matere;
Neþer of whens they weren, cowde he not lere.
And euere he beheld with herte wel sadde
what joye þe sowdeours of Artheur Made,
whiche that Maden hym to smerte
and forto ben Ryht hevy jn herte.
For so worthy men these xlij Sowdiours were,
but abouen hem alle Artheur hadde most chere.
wherfore the kynges dowhter dame gonnore
Fulsore hire loue on hym caste thore,
and desired jn herte ful pryvyle,
to hym j-weddid that sche myhte be
aboven alle tho that Evere sche say;
thus this storye Reherseth jn fay.

[leaf 146 *d*]

Then they begin to talk of other things, much to the regret of the king

Gonnore is greatly in love with Arthur.

Furthermore telleth ȝit this storye
that the fairest & wysest sche was, vtterlye,
of alle the ladyes of Bloye bretayngne
and best beloved, Jn certeygne,
the fairest, the bryhtest of al that lond
Sauf Elayne Sauȝ pere, j vndirstonde,
whiche was Percyes wif of þe Rous,
and sche þe dowhtyr of kyng Pellous,

In beauty, wisdom, and popularity,

she is surpassed only by Elaine.

daughter of king Pellous,

15512. *thus* corrected from *this*.

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and aftyr was sche wyf to kyng Alayn,
that hurt was *with* þe veniable spere, certayn.
or Pellenors. Ek this Pellenors, that pellous callen we,
with the maimed thighs. thorwgh bothe thyes j-maymed was he,
as the seint Graal schal maken mynde,
lyk as here-aftyr jn this storie scholen ȝe fynde.

This mayden, of whiche ȝe vndirstond,
was the fairest thorwh-owt ony Lond.
Now sesen we now of this matere,
whereof more in the story of the Holy Graal. and til eftsones non more to speke þerof here,
tyl that thaventuris of seint Graal
holy discuren hit Somme an al.
and speken we forth of this meyne oure fille,
that jn kyng leodagannes court abyden stylle.

Ryaly at here Soper weren they dyht,
as hit belongede to men of myht.
After supper, Merlin takes the three kings aside, And whanne that the tables j-drawen were,
the thre kynges on syde merlyn took there,
and openly he seide there to hem alle:
"wilen ȝe now heren what is jn breteyne befalle?"
"ȝe certes," quod kyng Artheur tho,
"that wolde j weten, er that J go."
and tells them what has happened in Britain: the invasion of the heathen, "wile ȝe weten," quod merlyn, "with-owten faylle,
aforn Londone hath ben ful gret Bataylle
ayens the hethene, that there j-entrid Js
and þat lond dispoillid han & robbed, J-wys.
their great transport of prey, So that with the pray that they hadden take,
Towardis douer here weye gonne they make
jnto the ost to leden that cariage
with ten thousend men of gret parage.
thanne so hit behapped jn that tyde,
the arrival of Arthur's five nephews, that fyve of thy nevews comen þere Ryde,
that from here moderis departyd were
and vnknoweng of ony of here fadris dere.
thanne how these forreyeris that they mette,
j schal ȝow tellen, with-owten ony lette.

15529. *here* crossed out after *we*.

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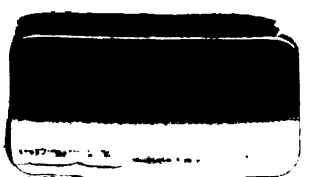

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